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An Illustrated Monthly

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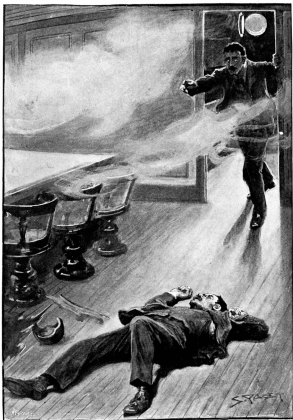
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"I SAW THE BODY OF BOB LYING UPON HIS BACK."

(See page 627.)

THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

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No. 102.

An Extraordinary Story.

BY NEIL WYNN WILLIAMS.

Author of "The Boy who Came Home," etc.



HE soldiers handed me over to him.

I looked at the collar of his blue tunic. "41 B," I read, in nickel-plated letters. Then I found myself

meeting his eye.

He drew himself up.

I knew what was coming.

"It's my duty to warn you that anything you may now say——" he had begun, very seriously, when I stopped him short.

"Here!" I said, holding out my wrists, "I know all about that. Slip 'em on. And save your breath."

He grinned, recognising me for an old hand.

"Yes!" I said, "it 'ull have to come out. You may as well hear it now as later in court."

"But——" he began to object.

I shook my head.

"It was, and it wasn't, my fault," I said. "But listen!" And I told him this, which is the truth.

His name is Bob Fry. He lived at 3, Fiddlers' Court, Whitechapel. I did not kill him. And the other one! I know nothing about him. He had nothing to do with our job. I never set eyes on him before last night.

In November, 1884, I broke into 405, Park Lane—Park Lane in London, I mean.

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Three nights afterwards I got drunk, and must have blabbed it out to Bob.

The next morning he came to me.

"So you have put the swag with Jackson's, have you, Tom?" he said.



"'HERE!' I SAID. 'SLIP 'EM ON.'"

It was my first job. I was taken with a trembling fit.

"H—how d'you know?" I stammered; and I'd have run for it, if I had had the strength.

He found it difficult to make me understand. But presently my head was clearer.

"You want—you want——"

"Yes," he said, cheerfully, "you'll give me half."

A shiver seemed to go right through me. Giving a laugh, I tried to deceive myself.

"You always *will* have your joke, Bob," I said.

The expression of his face changed in a second to sternness.

"Drop it!" he said.

"But——" I began.

"That is enough!" he interrupted. "I am in the know, Tom. And if you don't share, I'll split."

There! that was how he had me first. And, come through it safe, "Never again," I said to myself. *Lor!* but bricklaying along of Bob for years, I might have known him better. His share of the plunder gave him an appetite. He planned another robbery, and threatened me into it. And from that day to when he died last night, I was as under his thumb as his bread and cheese. There was no gainsaying him. He would have his own way in everything. It was a boast with him that he would, or he would die for it.

Now, I'll come straight to our latest and last. We're in June. It was on May the 15th that I met Bob, and he took me along Baker Street into Portman Square. The evening was foggy. They had lit the lamps early. I was looking at the steam coming off a horse's flanks, when Bob gripped me by the arm.

"There!" he said, nodding.

"Which?" I asked.

"Thirty-nine A," he replied, in a whisper.

I looked at the house: the walls, in their white paint, reflected the light of a lamp smoothly; the iron rails of its inclosure were tipped with gold. It was one of the largest in the square. My eye scanned the rows of handsomely tiled window-boxes.

"Let's get a bit closer," I said.

We moved forwards. The knocker of the double door was of shining, heavy brass. There was bright light in all of the windows. And glancing below, I saw a dinner being prepared by a white-capped man-cook.

"It should hold something," I remarked.

"It does, you bet," said Bob.

I looked at the house once more, carefully, all over.

"How about the back?" I said.

"We shan't trouble that yet awhile," he replied. And drawing closer to me, he

added, in a whisper, "They've a maidservant who thinks she is the prettiest girl in London."

I laughed, guessing the lay at once.

"Yes," he grumbled, "I ain't handsome enough for her. But you——"

I took him up short.

"Psutt! I'll twist her round my finger," I said.

The next day found me at a second-hand clothes shop. Where? In the "Cut."

"What for you, sir?" says the Jew in charge.

"Same as last time," I said. "Topper, black morning coat and vest; grey pants. Ah! and I'll have that tie," I added, pointing to a green silk. He did them up in a parcel.

I went home and dressed up fine. Afterwards I went to a barber's.

"Shave and hair cut!" I said.

Here I was very particular. "Part me in the middle," I said, "and take care of the curls." He didn't get them right at first. "No," I says; "I want 'em flat and more down on the forehead." And I pulled them carefully into position, while he stuck 'em there with one of his fakes.

I went straight from the barber's to Portman Square. And a clock was just striking three as she climbed up the steps leading from the basement of 39A. Bob's description had been first-class. I knew her at a glance.

She turned towards Oxford Street, walking as such girls do walk—as if she were treading on eggs.

I let her get out of the square.

"Pardon me, miss," I said, mock respectfully, stepping up from behind, "but I've just come up from Fern Manor, and *could* you oblige me with the way to Oxford Street?"

And gently smiling to show my teeth, I took off my topper to let her have a good look at me.

She had pulled herself up stiff. Suddenly she bridled and smirked. "Tee-hee-hee!" she laughed. "I—I am just going there," she said. "If——"

I flashed a ring on my finger.

We went on side by side. When we parted, I was calling her "Jane," and she had promised to walk with me in the Park.

Within a fortnight I had the information from her that we wanted. There were both plate and jewels in 39A. We were going to break in—indeed, we had settled the date—when something she said changed our plans.



"I TOOK OFF MY TOPHAT."

"She tells you that the family go to Warhampton next week?" Bob remarked.

"She says so," I replied. "The Colonel has a country house near there, close to the sea. And he is going down for his Militia training."

"Thirty-nine A will be a stiff nut to crack!" Bob said, suggestively, blinking with his eyes.

"I have said so, all along," I said.

"There is still time and to spare. Yer might see about the other," he suggested, after a pause.

I saw the girl that same evening.

"Well!" said Bob, on my return.

"They take their plate and jewellery with 'em," I said.

"But the house!" he exclaimed, impatiently.

I began to describe it, accurately and minutely, according to the description that I had wheedled out of her.

"It 'ull be twice as easy again!" Bob said, when I had finished. "We 'ull follow 'em down."

"All right!" I replied. "All right! but

I haven't told you one thing."

"What's that?" he asked.

"She introduced me to the butler, to-night. We came upon him sudden in Orchard Street."

Bob started.

"Did yer carry it off?" he asked, hastily.

"I don't know, I ain't sure," I replied. "He looked at me suspicious when she said that I was her friend, Mr. Vere—the owner of Canstead Manor."

"But he see yer face!"

"I was in the light of a lamp. He must ha' done," I said.

"That settles it!" said Bob, sharply. "The little fool 'ull be sure to flaunt yer in his face. . . . Yes! men ain't such fools as women. . . . We 'ull leave 39A alone, and go down to Warhampton after 'em. If he has his suspicions, he won't think of that move. . . . Aye! it 'ull be easier and safer all ways."

A week later, Bob and I—dressed as "commercials," and carrying the tools in black bags—took our seats in an express. The journey was a tidy long one. At length, "There is the sea!" I said, pointing out of the carriage window. And the train slowing down, we presently stopped at Warhampton.

There was a band of music playing outside in the station yard. I could not hear what the porter said. "What say?" I asked.

"Anything to come out, sir?" he said, pointing to one of the vans.

"No," I answered. "But wot's on here with the music?"

"It's some o' the Militia a-join' off to Sea View Forts," he explained.

I nudged Bob.

"That 'ull be part of his regiment," I whispered. "The gal said they weren't fur from the Forts. He rides over the first thing every morning."

Outside in the yard, I wanted to stop and have a look. But Bob was thirsty.

"Come on!" he said, impatiently. "You

can see a row of fools any time. I want a drink."

We did not stay long in Warhampton. The Colonel's house was in a suburb—Checkton—two miles out. There was enough sun to make the waves sparkle. Every now and again a breeze brought us the boom of the guns that the Militia were firing somewhere ahead. I did not object to the walk along the shore. "How would you like to be aboard of her?" I asked Bob, jokingly, pointing to a steamer lying at anchor in the distance.

But his mind was on our coming job.

"There is Checkton!" he said; and, shading his eyes, he added, "That 'ull be

But we had no choice. If we had put it later, we should not have had time to get across country to the London express at Blendon. And that was Bob's plan for us, after we had secured the plunder.

There was no moon. Through the sky of drifting grey cloud, stars occasionally gleamed like pebbles through a softly-flowing stream. Beneath, there was light enough to show us our way over an expanse of grey-green lawn towards the dark mass of the house. Avoiding a gravel path, we trod stickily over a raised flower-bed into a small shrubbery. We were through the latter in less than a minute; and putting goloshes over our boots, we began to cross the cobble-stones of a



"THAT 'ULL BE THE COLONEL'S HOUSE."

the Colonel's house to the left there, if I ain't mistook."

Jane had described the Colonel's house to me as a square, white mansion, standing close to some houses bordering upon a small semi-circular bay. I saw the latter, with boats and fishing-smacks lying idly upon its shelf of mud. I saw the houses and the church with the reddish spire that she had mentioned. And sweeping my eyes to the left, "Yes, that 'ull be the Colonel's house," I agreed.

People usually sleep heaviest between two and four in the morning. Why? I don't know, but they do. Soon after midnight we scaled the iron railings surrounding the Colonel's gardens. The hour was an unusually early one for such a job as ours.

yard. We halted right up against the wall of the house. Bob gripped me by the arm. I stood steady and dumb as a rock. A breeze rustled some leaves by us. Bob's grip slowly slackened and left my arm. I heard him fumbling at his bag. There was a "click," and suddenly the electric lamp which he carried showed me the blank, gleaming panes of a row of windows. I pointed to the third from a door.

"The one with the blinds half-drawn!" I whispered.

We moved to it like shadows.

Bob flashed the light within. We saw a table, chairs, a great cooking range, and—Yes! it was the kitchen, as she had described.

"Right!" I whispered. "The plate-room lies at the back and to the left."

I opened my bag.

"Give me a bunch up!" I said. And with a diamond I snicked round a pane. Afterwards, drawing it to me with a big blob of putty, I soon had my hand through and under the lock.

Bob let me down. We shoved the sash up, inch by inch. A smell of food whiffed out. Presently it was wide open, so that we could hear the tick of a clock within the warm atmosphere. It seemed safe. Drawing a revolver, Bob motioned to me to enter.

"Hist! what was that?" he said, climbing in by my side.

I pointed to the grate.

"Nothing. The cinders fell in," I whispered.

We crossed the kitchen on tiptoe, and cautiously opened its door. A passage lay beyond. We trod over the cocoa-nut matting of this till level with a door on the left. I turned the handle very gently. It was locked. "Yes," I said, over my shoulder. And Bob took out the tools.

It was a "patent," and it took us five minutes' difficult work before we entered. The room was small, of oblong shape. The first thing that I noticed was a dresser, with brass-handled drawers underneath. It ran round three sides of the room. Upon some shelves above were some green-baize plate-baskets. I looked into them: they were empty. Then I began to try the drawers, beginning from the right. The first was locked; but tapping the bottom underneath, I heard the clink of metal within. I went on to the second and third: "Locked, locked," I muttered. At the fourth, my attention was taken by two strange objects upon the dresser above. The beam of Bob's lantern did not lay there very well. I turned round.

"W-what are these?" I asked, in a whisper.

He flashed the light more plainly. "They are officer's glove-trees!" he explained.

I had never seen such things. I took up one of the stiff wooden hands to examine it closer. Just then my elbow joggled the other, which was standing upright, with a white glove fitted upon it. It rolled off the dresser. There was a hollow thump. And a black something, which it had struck at my feet, sprang up and made for the door. As it wriggled through, there was time to see that it was a cat. The brute had made me start. I was trembling when I began later to force the first of the drawers.

Bob watched me for a while.

"Here! give me hold—you'll take all night over it," he said, impatiently. And seizing hold of the jemmy, he rammed the sharp end into a crevice. There was a rending of wood, an explosive snap, and the drawer was levered

out a couple of inches—the lock broken. We judged the stuff at a glance. There could be no mistake. "The genu-ine!" said Bob, and he began upon the second drawer still more boldly, reckoning that they would not hear us in the other part of the house.

But he forgot the cat that we had let loose.

"What is it?" he said, when I seized his arm, restrainingly.

"I . . . I thought . . . Listen!" I said.

A thrill went through me.

I stepped lightly to the door and into the passage. A few paces took me to a red baize door. I opened it to listen better. A man, in a nightshirt and trousers, was advancing towards me with a lighted candle. His eyes took me in staringly. The moustache! I knew him. It was the Colonel himself. "They're on us!" I yelled; and slamming and bolting the door full in his face, I turned and fled. Back into the kitchen and through its window Bob and I went anyhow. He reached the shrubbery first. "Crash," I fol-



"A MAN WAS ADVANCING TOWARDS ME."

lowed him. Over the bed and on to the lawn I went with a trip and a stumble. "H'Quick! H'Quick!" I panted, when we got to the rails. And the red flares, the sharp reports of a revolver from an upper window of the house, seemed to take the senses from us—we ran on, on, till the boats upon the seashore were before us. And how it was is how it might be—Bob got in, or I got in, or we both got in together; I remember nothing till we found ourselves lying, listening, out upon the sea.

The lights of Checkton had grown dim. We had rowed some distance parallel with the shore, and were thinking of pulling in again to the land. Suddenly I turned my head round towards the bow of the boat. The handle of my oar struck Bob in the back.

"What are you doing?" he said, looking round.

I kept my eyes upon an oilcloth in the bow. Presently, I was sure that there was a movement under it. And raising my oar from the rollock, I gave it a prod with the blade. "Bob! Bob! There is someone here!" I said.

The words were scarcely out of my mouth when the oilskin rucked up into a heap. The light was uncertain, but the shoulders of a man's figure were not to be mistaken as he sat up.

"Halloa!" said Bob, blankly. "Who is that, there?"

"I don't know," I said, watching the figure rub its eyes.

"Who are you?" said Bob, after a pause. There was no reply.

"D'ye hear, there?" said Bob. "We're askin' yer who yer are?"

The figure swayed, making the boat lurch.

"Take care!" Bob cried out, in alarm, "or you 'ull have us over!"

"Who is he?" he asked me, again, excitedly; adding, without waiting for a reply:—

"Here! Stay! Where is my lantern?"

I passed it into his hand.

There was a "click," and a ray of light fell full upon the blinking eyes of a stranger. His face was round and freckled: its expression flaccid with sleep, its hair touselled.

Bob clambered past my side.

"Why the deuce don't yer answer who yer are, man?" he said, threateningly.

The stranger opened his mouth. I remember seeing the teeth. I shall never forget the sound. Then he pointed with a smile to his ears.

"He is deaf and dumb!" I said, spasmodically.

Neither Bob nor I knew how to talk upon our fingers. The appearance of the stranger was a puzzle, till observing his ragged coat, we guessed that he must be some waif of Checkton who had crept under the oilskin for sleep and shelter. Deaf and dumb, it was only the motion of the waves or my prod with the oar that had awaked him. To arrive at this conclusion was a relief to the alarm which his presence at first occasioned us. And confident that he neither heard nor understood what we were about, we again gave attention to the shore. It had receded, strangely, remarkably, whilst we had been occupied with the stranger. We recognised with a sudden anxiety that it was now but a mere looming at the water's edge. I shoved out my oar in a hurry. Bob and I began to row silently and strenuously. We had not been at work for a minute, when I felt a hand upon my shoulder, and, scrambling with a heavy breathing over my oar, the mute went on past Bob to the tiller. Presently, he was showing himself clever enough with the steering; and the queer cries that he gave every now and again seemed to show that he was as anxious as we were to reach the shore.

But, row as we might, we could not come closer. Contrary, we seemed to be getting farther away. Bob began to tire. "Row up!" I says. "For God's sake, row up, or the tide 'ull have us out to sea."

It was no use. He slackened and slackened. And later, when I turned to look how we stood, I saw nothing but a white veil: the current had taken us into a sea-fog. That seemed to settle the matter. I pulled in my oar in despair.

For the next two hours I don't know how we went. The fog came around us thicker and thicker. We could see nothing but the black, oily heave of the waves into it. Still the current must have drifted us, for of a sudden I heard a bell.

"D'ye hear that?" said Bob. "It sounds like a funeral."

"Tang! Tang! Tang!" I did hear it: so hollow, so melancholy—it gave me the shivers. But a funeral!

"Go on! What next?" I said; and looking round, I suddenly saw a yellow light sitting frouzy and high up in the mist.

We rowed for it straight.

But it was not so far off as it appeared to be. A very few strokes, and we made out

the dark bulk of a steamer lying at anchor: the light was above her, the sound of a solitary bell was clanging from her deck.

"What is to be done now?" said Bob, when our hail for help met with no reply.

"Try again," I said. "Now together: one, two, three."

We listened, flashing Bob's lantern.

There was the beating plash of our boat's bow; and farther away, the slap and drawn-out rush of the waves as they swept along the steamer's iron side.

"They don't hear us," I said. "Let's pull round her to the other side." I turned to the mute. Pointing to the steamer, I made a circular wave with my hand.

He shook his head. I did not understand him. And we began to pull.

But the boat's head went away from the steamer instead of towards her.

Bob turned angrily round.

"You're taking us wrong!" he shouted to the mute; and then remembering, he insisted upon what we wanted with passionate, forcible signs.

The portholes of the steamer showed no light. We could see no one upon her decks: nothing but a haze of yellow light shedding itself downwards around the black cylinder of the funnel. Suddenly Bob caught sight of a something white hanging down her leeward side. He turned the beam of his lantern upon it. We saw a rope-ladder.

"There yer are!" he said, hopefully; "we can climb aboard by that."

We bumped the steamer's side twice before I succeeded in fastening our painter to the rope-ladder. I rose to my feet, preparing to

climb upwards. At that moment the mute drew my attention energetically upon him. From his position in the stern, he was making forcible signs to me not to ascend. I directed Bob's attention to him. The mute again pointed to the steamer, and shook his head. Waving his hand towards the sea, he afterwards pushed at the iron side of the steamer, and, with a movement of the back and arms, suggested that we should row away. There was an earnestness and anxiety in his expression that made me indefinitely uneasy. Bob reassured me.

"I don't b'lieve he is right in his head," he remarked. "But I'll watch him while you climb up and wake 'em."

Bob was sitting between the mute and the painter which kept us fast to the steamer.

"All right," I replied, after a hesitancy. "But take care he don't get at the rope. Half a chance, and I b'lieve he 'ud let yer loose."

Being nervous of the height, I counted the rungs. There were twelve of them before I reached the top. The fog made the light bad, and I stumbled on to the deck. Recovering myself, I went right under the lantern where it was hanging

from a mast. There was no one to be seen. Aft beyond the bulky looming of the bridge-house I could hear the bell clanging mournfully. I moved towards it, gradually getting into deeper shadow, until I passed within the draughty darkness of a passage leading by the engines. I felt my way through this over an iron floor littered with coal grit to a deck beyond. Here in the fleece of fog I made out a door dimly to my right. "Hoy!" I shouted through it into the



"WE SAW A ROPE-LADDER."

stillness, "lend us a hand below there, will yer, please?"

My voice echoed hollowly amidst the darkness into which I was gazing. I repeated my cry. I would have descended; but I had left Bob's lantern in the boat, and I dared not risk a fall down the rungs of the iron ladder that I felt. No one came. No one answered.

I moved away to the bulk of a saloon cabin facing the engine-room. The door was open. I felt my way in to a long table. I opened door after door of cabins ranged around. The pallid eye of a porthole stared at me through the darkness of each. When I had called, naught broke their hush but a muffled clang of the bell upon the deck overhead.

"Well!" said Bob, as I looked down upon the boat.

I steadied my voice by an effort.

"There is no one aboard," I said.

He swore an oath of impatience and incredulity.

"Come and see for yourself," I said, eager for his company by my side. . . .

Bob's voice rose angrily: "Yer may as well. Yer 'ull have to come, yer know."

"Coax him!" I said, bending over the bulwark. "Coax him, Bob. Don't treat the poor devil rough."

And presently the mute mounted first, Bob after him.

Our search was thorough. There was no one in the dismantled cabins either fore or aft. We ascended an upper deck to the bell. "Tang! Tang! Tang!" Its note was mechanically beat and driven out across the sea by an electric current. We descended into the engine-room. We flashed our light amidst great beams and cogs of steel. They were rusty, motionless, suspended in their iron gravity. The furnaces were black and empty of fire. Strange, too! opening the iron-plated doors near by the boiler, we saw that the bunkers were toppling-full of glittering coal.

The mystery of the steamer's desertion seemed inexplicable. It oppressed me with a vague fear of I knew not what. "Speak up, man," said Bob. "What are yer afraid of—a ghost?"

And thankful to have a big deck instead of a boat under his feet, he suggested that we should sleep in three of the saloon bunks till daylight broke and we could see where we were. Bob was always masterful for his own way. The fog was still thick, and the waves seemed to be rising. I offered no objection. It was

different with the mute. So soon as he saw that we were intending to make a night of it on board, he recommenced his signs that we should enter the boat and quit the steamer. He was strenuous and persistent. Bob answered by shoving him into the saloon and pointing to a bunk. The mute turned to me appealingly. Again I was struck by the anxiety and earnestness of his face. There was a reasonable purpose about the expression, which was not that of a half-witted man, which seemed to confirm my misgivings. Suddenly the creature seemed to understand my thoughts: he took me by the hand.

I started at his touch.

"Half a moment, Bob!" I said, drawing a piece of paper out of my left-hand pocket. "Have you a pencil about yer?"

The mute, seeing my lips move, looked towards Bob for an explanation. The latter, fumbling in a pocket, produced a small end of greasy pencil. The mute gave a cry, short, detached. He shook his head. No! he could not write.

That finished up the remnant of Bob's patience. He began to pull the mute towards one of the bunks.

There was a sharp struggle, the mute giving inarticulate cries. Once he broke away; but Bob was too quick, gripping him again just as he reached the door of the saloon.

"Gentle! I am treating him 'gentle,' yer fule," said Bob. He pushed and pulled the mute into a cabin, turning the key upon him. Then he faced me, panting, across the table: "He wun't get the boat now," he said.

I did not reply.

Bob had locked the mute into a cabin near the entrance door of the saloon. We ourselves entered into one more forward. I don't know why we chose this, unless it were that there was a piece of carpet upon the floor which made it look warmer than the dismantled floors of the others. There was no bedding in any of the berths. "Which coffin will yer have?" Bob asked, jokingly, pointing to the bare planks of an upper and a lower.

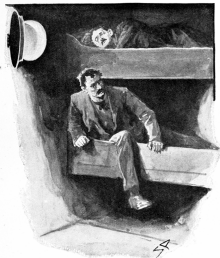
We had not laid ten minutes when Bob jerked himself up in a passion. The cries of the mute were reaching our ears. Bob threatened and swore at him. There was a whimper like a frightened dog's. Then Bob returned to me, and the vessel grew still as death, save for the "tang, tang, tang" of the mournful bell above.

Bob was soon off. I was awake a long time: I fell asleep, I don't know when.

There are times when one resists being awakened. It is usually so after the body has been greatly fatigued or the mind much excited. In my drowsiness I grew conscious of the cries: they distressed me. Presently their persistency had its way: I was connecting them with the mute. I was vaguely wondering how long it would be before they

explosion, with whose flame of red light came an instantaneous hail of stunning sounds upon iron and wood. For a second I lay stiffly passive in the outrageous hell of sound. Then with a yell I rushed to the door of the cabin.

A white, whirling smoke met my gaze. Tinging with denser yellow at a suction, it coiled and streamed aside so that I saw the body of Bob lying upon his back. His arms were stretched behind, his legs apart. There was a rending of wood. I saw the mute tearing his way through a whitely splintered door. I remember nothing more till I found myself in the open upon the deck.



"D'YE HEAR THE ROW THAT FELLOW IS MAKING AGAIN?"

aroused Bob. A sudden disturbance in the berth beneath made me open my eyes. The porthole was limpid with daylight. "D'ye hear the row that fellow is making again?" Bob's voice asked, angrily.

The light was too strong. I let my eyelids fall sleepily. "Es," I murmured, wishing to sleep again.

Bob stamped his foot passionately. I heard him make a rush for our cabin door. He threw it open, entering the saloon impetuously. I heard his steps up to a certain point. Then the affair happened—the shock and crash, the convulsion of a thunderous

The steamer was an old, disused hulk, bought by Government. Dismantled of almost everything save the coal left in her bunkers, to protect the boilers for experimental purposes, it had been within the common knowledge of Checkton that she was anchored five miles off Sea View Point to serve as a target for the trials that the Militia Artillery were going to make with a new gun. The mute knew this, and had endeavoured to prevent us from boarding her. There was still a possibility that our presence might have been discovered before the artillery opened fire. But we had fastened our boat to *lee-ward* of the vessel. When day broke it was perceived

neither from the shore battery nor from the marker's boat, anchored away to the right. And it was only when the first shot had been fired, and an officer came to examine the effects of the hit, that our presence was discovered.

Till the moment that I was brought into the orderly room ashore, I had hopes of escape. But it was not to be. The Colonel recognised me at a glance. And according to his orders that I should be handed over to civil power, the soldiers handed me over.

"Forty-one B," I said, "that is the true story, and so I'll tell 'em in court."

The Sinking of the "Merrimac."

BY RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON.

[The sinking of the *Merrimac* in Santiago harbour was one of those exploits which breathe the very spirit of the romance of war. No forlorn hope more desperate can be imagined than the enterprise undertaken by Lieutenant Hobson and his gallant crew of volunteers—to take their ship, by moonlight, into the narrow entrance of a harbour charged with mines and guarded by the ships' guns, the shore batteries, and the search-lights of the enemy, there to blow her up with torpedoes and sink her (with themselves on board), so as to block the channel against the exit of the Spanish fleet within. It was a hundred to one that not a soul of them would return alive. The success with which the feat was accomplished—the applause with which the whole world rang—will be fresh in the memory of our readers. We are glad to offer them the treat of reading an account of this deed of daring written by the man who planned and executed it. Lieutenant Hobson's story is, indeed, in one respect unique. We recall no instance in which such an exploit has been related by its chief actor in words at once so simple, vivid, and entralling. This story has recently appeared in a volume entitled "The Sinking of the *Merrimac*, by Naval Constructor Richmond Pearson Hobson" (published by Fisher Unwin). The following pages, with illustrations done under Lieutenant Hobson's own supervision, describe the actual "run in" of the *Merrimac*, the sinking, and the almost miraculous escape of the crew. But the whole book, with its account of the preparations for the exploit, and of the truly noble treatment of the captives by the officers of Spain, is more absorbing than most fiction. No lover of the gallantry and the chivalry of war can afford to miss it.

At the moment when the following account begins, the position of affairs is this: The *Merrimac*, a large collier, has been stripped, supplied with special means for speedy anchorage at the spot desired, and fitted with eight torpedoes, slung outside, and fired by separate batteries on board. The time is a little after moonrise on the night of June 3d, 1898. The other vessels of the fleet have drawn off, and the fated collier, with her little crew of heroes, is steaming slowly forward to her doom.]



PREPARATION was ended.

The road was clear. The hour for execution had come.

The *Merrimac* was heading about west-south-west. The engine telegraph was turned to "slow speed ahead," the helm was put a-starboard, and we gathered headway and swung round by the southward and stood up slowly on the course. The moon was about an hour and a half high, and, steering for the Morro, we were running straight down the reflected path of light.

As we stood on, the outlines of Morro and other shore objects became clearer and clearer. The blockading vessels were miles behind. When we arrived within about two thousand yards there could be no further question of surprise. In the bright moonlight we were in clear view, and our movements must long since have caused suspicion. The enemy was now doubtless on the verge of sounding the general alarm, if indeed it had not already been sounded.

Morro drew farther to starboard. It bore north, then north by east, then north-north-east. We must keep clear of the two-fathom bank and not overreach to the westward.

Morro drew higher in the sky, and the western side of the entrance, though dim as expected, showed the bald spot of the sea battery on top.

We were within five hundred yards, and still no token from the enemy, though the silence was ominous. Ah, we should make the channel now, no matter what they might do! I knew how long the vessel carried headway, we were making nearly nine knots, and soon the flood-tide would help, while we had over seven thousand tons of reserve buoyancy, which would carry us the required distance even under a mortal wound.

Another ship's length, and a flash darted out from the water's edge at the left side of the entrance. The expected crash through the ship's side did not follow, nor did the projectile pass over; it must have gone astern. Strange to miss at such short range! Another flash—another miss! This time the projectile plainly passed astern. Night-glasses on the spot revealed a dark object—a picket-boat with rapid-fire guns lying in the shadow. As sure as fate he was firing at our rudder, and we should be obliged to pass him broadside within a ship's length! If we only had a rapid-fire gun we could have

disposed of the miserable object in ten seconds; yet there he lay unmolested, firing point-blank at our exposed rudder, so vital to complete success. A flash of rage and exasperation passed over me. The admiration due this gallant little picket-boat did not come till afterward. Glasses on the starboard bow showed the sharp, steep, step-like fall with which the western point of Morro drops into the water. This was the looked-for guide, the channel carrying deep water right up to the wall. "A touch of port helm!" was the order. "A touch of port helm, sir," was the response. "Steady!" "Steady, sir." Now, even without helm, we should pass down safe. Suddenly there was a crash from the port side. "The western battery has opened on us, sir!" called Charette, who was still on the bridge, waiting to take the message to the engine-room if telegraph and signal-cord should be shot away. "Very well; pay no attention to it," I replied, without turning, Morro Point, on the starboard side, requiring all attention. The latter part of the answer was spoken for the benefit of the helmsman. "Mind your helm!" "Mind the helm, sir." "Nothing to starboard?" "Nothing to starboard, sir." The clear, firm voice of Deignan told that there need be no fear of his distraction. I estimated the distance to Morro Point at about three ships' lengths, and wondered if the men below would stand till we covered another ship's length, two ships' lengths being the distance at which it had been decided to give the signal to stop. All of a sudden, *whir! ding!* came a projectile across the bridge and struck something. I looked. The engine telegraph was still there. Deignan and the binnacle were still standing. Two and a half ships' lengths! Two ships' lengths! Then over the engine telegraph went the

order: "Stop." Sure and steady the answer-pointer turned. There need have been no anxiety about the constancy of the brave men below.

The engine stopped, and somehow I knew the sea connections were thrown open. This has been a puzzle to me ever since. For how could the bonnet flying off, or the axe-blows on copper piping, or the inrush of water make enough noise or vibration to be heard or felt on the bridge, particularly with guns firing and projectiles striking? It may be that the condition of expectation and the fact of the fulfilment of the first part of the order suggested the conclusion, but sure I was that the connections were open and that the ship was beginning to settle.

"You may 'lay down' to your torpedoes now, Charette." "Aye, aye, sir." On the vessel forged, straight and sure the bow entered. Morro shut off the sky to the right. The firing now became general, but we were passing the crisis of navigation and could spare attention to nothing else. A swell seemed to set our stern to port, and the bow swung heavily toward Morro, which we had hugged close intentionally. "Starboard!"

"Starboard, sir." Still we swung starboard! "Starboard, I say!" "The helm's a-starboard, sir."

Our bow must have come within 30 ft. of Morro Rock before the vessel began to recover from the sheer, and we passed it close aboard. "Meet her!" "Meet her, sir." The steering-gear was still ours, and only about half a ship's length more and we should be in the position chosen for the manœuvre. The sky began to open up beyond Morro. There was the cove. Yes; there was the position! "Hard aport!" "Hard aport, sir." No response of the ship! "Hard aport, I say!" "The helm is hard aport, sir, and lashed." "Very



RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON, NAVAL CONSTRUCTOR, U.S.N.
From a Photograph.

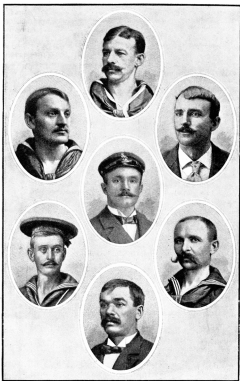
well, Deignan," I said ; " lay down to your torpedo."

Oh, heaven ! Our steering-gear was gone, shot away at the last moment, and we were charging forward straight down the channel !

We must have had four and three-quarter knots' speed of our own, and the tide must have been fully a knot and a half. What ground-tackle could hold against a mass of over seven thousand tons moving with a velocity of six knots ? We stood on a little longer to reduce the speed further. A pull on Murphy's cord to stand by—three steady pulls—the bow-anchor fell. A pause, then a shock, a muffled ring above the blast of guns : torpedo No. 1 had gone off promptly and surely, and I knew that the collision bulk-head was gone.

If the bow-chain in breaking would only give us a sheer, and the other torpedoes proved as sure, we should have but a short interval to float, and, holding on to the stern-anchor, letting go only at the last moment, we might still effectually block the channel. An interval elapsed and grew longer—no answer from torpedo No. 2, none from No. 3. Thereupon I crossed the bridge and shouted : " Fire all torpedoes ! " My voice was drowned. * Again and again I yelled the order, with hands over mouth, directing the sound forward, below, aft.

It was useless. The rapid-fire and machine-gun batteries on Socapa slope had opened up at full blast, and projectiles were exploding and clanging. For noise, it was Niagara magnified. Soon Charette came running up.



Heroldolph Clausen.
Osborn Walter Swigman.
(Front)

George Charette.
Isabel Montague.
Francis Kelly.

J. R. Murphy.
George F. Phillips.
(Photographs.)

THE MEMBERS OF MR. DEIGNAN'S CREW.

"Torpedoes 2 and 3 will not fire, sir ; the cells are shattered all over the deck." "Very well ; lay down and underrun all the others, beginning at No. 4, and spring them as soon as possible." In a moment No. 5 went off with a fine ring. Deignan had waited for No. 2 and No. 3, and not hearing them had tried his own, but had found the connections broken and the cells shattered. He then went down to Clausen at No. 5. No other torpedo responded. No. 6 and No. 8 had suffered

the same fate as Nos. 2, 3, and 4. With only two exploded torpedoes we should be some time sinking, and the stern-anchor would be of first importance. I determined to go down aft and stand over to direct it personally, letting go at the opportune moment.

Passing along the starboard gangway, I reached the rendezvous. Stepping over the men, they appeared to be all present. There was Charette, returned from a second attempt at the torpedoes. There could be no further hope from that quarter, and, oh! there was Montague! The stern-anchor, then, was already gone. If the chain was broken, we should have no further means of controlling our position. Looking over the bulwarks, I saw that we were just in front of Estrella, apparently motionless, lying about two-thirds athwart the channel, the bow to the westward. Could it be that the ground-tackle had held? Then we should block the channel in spite of all.

I watched, almost breathless, taking a range of the bow against the shore-line. The bow moved, the stern moved—oh, heaven! the chains were gone! The tide was setting us down and would straighten us out if the stern should touch first. Oh, for the war-heads to put her down at once! But we were helpless.

There was nothing further to do but to accept the situation. We mustered, counting heads, and thought all were present; but we

must have counted wrongly, for after a minute or two Kelly came across the deck on all fours. He had done his duty below with promptness and precision, and had come on deck to stand by his torpedo. While putting on his life-preserver a large projectile had exploded close at hand—he thought against the mainmast—and he had been thrown with violence on the deck, face down, his upper lip being cut away on the right side. He must have lain there some little time unconscious, and had got up completely dazed, without memory. He looked on one side and then the other, saw the engine-room hatch—the first object recognised—and, under the force of habit, started down it, but found the way blocked by water, which had risen up around the cylinders. The sight of the water seemed to bring back memory, and soon the whole situation dawned upon him; he mounted again, and with heroic devotion went to his torpedo, only to find the cells and connections destroyed, when he started for the rendezvous. He had, indeed, brought his revolver-belt, so as to be in uniform, and adjusted it after reaching us. His reception must have seemed strange, for it was at the muzzle of my revolver. Thinking that our men were all at hand, it was a strange sensation to see a man come up on all fours, stealthily, as it seemed, from behind the hatch. Could they be boarding us so soon? My revolver covered



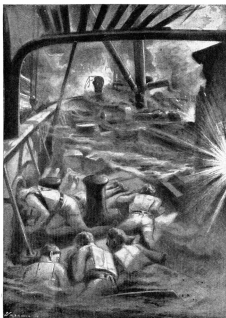
THE "MERRIMAC" AGROUND AND UNDER FIRE OFF ESTRELLA POINT.

him at once, and I looked to see if others followed. It was not until the revolver was almost in his face that the unusual uniform showed that the man was one of us. The idea of the Spaniards boarding us under the condition seemed ridiculous the moment the man was accounted for, and the mental processes and the action taken must have belonged to the class of reflex or spontaneous phenomena. Charette told me that he also, when he saw the man, drew his revolver with the idea of repelling boarders.

We were now moving bodily onward with the tide, Estrella Point being just ahead of the starboard quarter. A blasting shock, a lift, a pull, a series of vibrations, and a mine exploded directly beneath us. My heart leaped with exultation. "Lads, they are helping us!"

I looked to see the deck break, but it still held. I looked over the side to see her settle at once, but the rate was only slightly increased. Then came the thought, "Could it be that the coal had deadened the shock and choked the breach, or had the breach been made just where we were already flooded by sea connection and torpedo No. 5?" A sense of indescribable disappointment swept over me. I looked again: no encouragement. But, ah! we had stopped, Estrella Point had caught us strong, and we were steadily sinking two-thirds athwart. The work was done, and the rest was only a question of time. We could now turn our attention toward the course of action to be taken next.

"Here is a chock, sir, where you can look out without putting your head over the rail," called Charette. The hole was large, just above the deck, and well suited for observation. It was doubtless a valuable find of Charette's, for the patter of bullets had continued to increase, and now repeating-rifles were firing down on us from



ON THE DECK OF THE "MERRIMACK."

Estrella, just above.* It is remarkable, indeed, that some of these men did not see us, for though the moon was low, it was bright, and there we were with white life-preservers almost at the muzzles of their guns. The pouring out of ammunition into the ship at large must have prevented them from seeking special targets with deliberation.

The deafening roar of artillery, however, came from the other side, just opposite our position. There were the rapid-fire guns of different calibres, the unmistakable Hotchkiss revolving cannon, the quick succession and pause of the Nordenfolt multi-barrel, and the

* While in prison the men were told by Spanish soldiers that the troops of the 6th Regiment were lying the eastern side of the entrance, and troops of the 72d Regiment the western side; and the writer was informed by a Spanish army officer that troops were ordered in from far and near, a detachment from Santiago, of which he was a member, arriving only as the *Merrimack* sank.

tireless automatic gun.* A deadly fire came from ahead, apparently from shipboard. These larger projectiles would enter, explode, and rake us; those passing over the spar-deck would apparently pass through the deck-house, far enough away to cause them to explode just in front of us. All firing was at point-blank range, at a target that could hardly be missed, the Socapa batteries with plunging fire, the ships' batteries with horizontal fire. The striking projectiles and flying fragments produced a grinding sound, with a fine ring in it of steel on steel.

The deck vibrated heavily, and we felt the full effect, lying, as we were, full-length on our faces. At each instant it seemed that certainly the next would bring a projectile among us. The impulse surged strong to get away from a place where remaining seemed death, and the men suggested taking to the boat and jumping overboard; but I knew that any object leaving the ship would be seen, and to be seen was certain death, and, therefore, I directed all to remain motionless.

The test of discipline was severe, but not a man moved, not even when a projectile plunged into the boiler, and a rush of steam came up the deck not far from where we lay. The men expected a boiler explosion, but accepted my assurance that it would be only a steam-escape.

While lying thus, a singular physiological phenomenon occurred. After a few minutes, one of the men asked for the canteen, saying that his lips had begun to parch; then another asked, then another, and it was passed about to all. Only a few minutes had elapsed when they all asked again, and I felt my own lips begin to parch and my mouth to get dry. It seemed very singular, so I felt my pulse, and found it

entirely normal, and took account of the state of the nervous system. It was, if anything, more phlegmatic than usual, observation and reason taking account of the conditions without the participation of the emotions. Projectiles, indeed, were every moment expected among us, but they would have been taken in the same way.

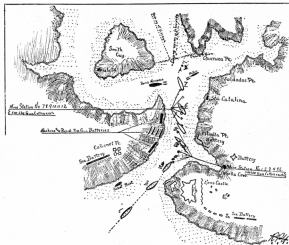
Reason took account of probabilities, and, according to the direction of the men's bodies with regard to the line of fire from the ships' guns, I waited to see one man's leg, another man's shoulder, the top of another man's head, taken off. I looked for my own body to be cut in two diagonally, from the left hip upward, and wondered for a moment what the sensation would be. Not having pockets, tourniquets had been carried loosely around my left arm, and a roll of antiseptic lint was held in my left hand. These were placed in readiness.

We must have remained thus for eight or ten minutes, while the guns fired ammunition as in a proving-ground test for speed. I was looking out of the chock, when it seemed that we were moving. A range was taken on the shore. Yes, the bow moved. Sunk deep, the tide was driving it on and straightening us out. My heart sank. Oh, for the war-heads! Why did not the admiral let us have them? The tide wrenched us off Estrella, straightened us out, and set us right down the channel toward the part where its width increases. Though sinking fast, there still remained considerable free-board, which would admit of our going some distance, and we were utterly helpless to hasten the sinking.

A great wave of disappointment set over me; it was anguish as intense as the exultation a few minutes before. On the tide set us, as straight as a pilot and tugboats could have guided. Socapa station fired two mines, but, alas! they missed us, and we approached the bight leading to Churruca Point to the right, and the bight cutting off Smith Cay from Socapa on the left, causing the enlargement of the channel. I saw with dismay that it was no longer possible to block completely. The *Merrimac* gave a premonitory lurch, then staggered to port in a death-throe. The bow almost fell, it sank so rapidly.

We crossed the keel-line of a vessel removed a few hundred feet away, behind Socapa; it was the *Reina Mercedes*. Her bow-torpedoes bore on us. Ah! to the right the *Pluton* was coming up from the bight, her torpedoes bearing. But, alas! cruiser

* Just after the surrender of Santiago, when I went in to assist Lieutenant Capelan, who was detailed to raise the mines, I took occasion to look at the batteries on Socapa, and found in place the following: In the sea battery, two 16-centimetre (6.3 in.) breech-loading rapid-fire, and three 95 mm. mortars, studded system, old pattern; on the slope opposite Estrella, one Nordenföhl 35-millimetre rapid-fire, one Nordenföhl four-barrel 25-millimetre, and four Hotchkiss 25-millimetre revolving cannon. There were emplacements from which guns had been removed, and it was impossible to tell what was the full strength of the battery when the *Merrimac* entered. I was informed that after the landing of United States troops a general redistribution of artillery took place, guns placed along the entrance being transferred to the defence of the city. I was also informed that the batteries of the destroyers had been used ashore at the entrance, but had been put back on the boats before they left the harbor on July 2d. It may be added that eight observation mines were found to have been fired at the *Merrimac*—all of the six from the Estrella station, and two of the six from the Socapa station, leaving only four, there being no material to replace the ones fired. Powell in his report of his observations speaks of seeing seven simultaneous columns of water as from torpedoes. As only two of my torpedoes went off, and at different times, this would indicate that six of these must have been from the Estrella station mines.



PLAN OF THE MANEUVER AS EXECUTED JUNE 30th, 1896—EXPLANATIONS.

1. Position when engine was stopped.
2. Position when helm was lost in operation.
3. Position when bow-anchor was let go and torpedoes were fired.
4. Position when struck by mine explosion, just before starboard quarter grounded on Estrella Point.
- 5-7. Positions as the tide wrenched the vessel off Estrella Point, and set her down channel—vessel gradually straightening out.
8. Position when sunk.
9. Submarine mines unexploded, mines Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12.
10. Submarine mines fired at vessel, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
11. Submarine mine that struck vessel, No. 3.
12. Automatic torpedoes fired by *Kaiser* *Mercedes* and *Pharos*.

NOTE.—The exact location of mines is not known. It would be perhaps fairly accurate to subdivide the distance between the extreme positions into eight equal parts, following the middle of the channel.

and destroyer were both too late to help us. They were only in at the death.*

The stricken vessel now reeled to port. Someone said: "She is going to turn over on us, sir," to which I replied: "No; she will right herself in sinking, and we shall be the last spot to go under." The firing suddenly ceased. The vessel lowered her head like a faithful animal, proudly aware of its sacrifice, bowed below the surface, and plunged forward. The stern rose and heeled heavily; it stood for a moment, shuddering, then started downward, righting as it went.

A great rush of water came up the gangway, seething and gurgling out of the deck.

* It was found that the *Kaiser Mercedes* fired both bow-torpedoes, and Admiral Cervera informed me afterward that the *Pharos* had fired her torpedoes. The day following our entrance, two automobile torpedoes were found outside, having drifted with the current, and, what was remarkable, one still had on the despatch, or drill-head. It cannot be said positively whether any of the automobiles took effect. If they did, we did not feel the effects where we were. In any case they could not have appreciably affected the sinking.

The mass was whirling from right to left "against the sun"; it seized us and threw us against the bulwarks, then over the rail. Two were swept forward as if by a momentary recession, and one was carried down into a coal-bunker—luckless Kelly. In a moment, however, with increased force, the water shot him up out of the same hole and swept him among us. The bulwarks disappeared. A sweeping vortex whirled above. We charged about with casks, cans, and spars, the incomplete stripping having left quantities on the deck. The life-preservers stood us in good stead, preventing chests from being crushed, as well as buoying us on the surface; for spars came end on like battering-rams, and the sharp corners of tin cans struck us heavily.

The experience of being swept over the side was rather odd. The water lifted and threw me against the bulwarks, the rail strik-



THE SINKING OF THE "MERRIMAC."

ing my waist; the upper part of the body was bent out, the lower part and the legs being driven heavily against what seemed to be the plating underneath, which, singularly enough, appeared to open. A football instinct came promptly, and I drew up my knees; but it seemed too late, and apparently they were being driven through the steel plate, a phenomenon that struck me as being most singular; yet there it was, and I wondered what the sensation would be like in having the legs carried out on one side of the rail and the body on the other, concluding that some embarrassment must be expected in swimming without legs. The situation was apparently relieved by the rail going down. Afterwards Charette asked: "Did those oil-cans that were left just forward of us trouble you also as we were swept out?"

Perhaps cans, and not steel-plates, separated before my knee-caps.

When we looked for the lifeboat we found that it had been carried away. The catamaran was the largest piece of floating *débris*; we assembled about it. The line suspending it from the cargo boom held and anchored us to the ship, though barely long enough to reach the surface, causing the raft to turn over and set us scrambling as the line came taut.

The firing had ceased. It was evident the enemy had not seen us in the general mass of moving objects; but soon the tide began to drift these away, and we were being left alone with the catamaran. The men were directed to cling close in, bodies below and only heads out, close under the edges, and were directed not to speak above a whisper, for the destroyer was near at hand, and boats were passing near. We mustered: all were present, and direction was given to remain as we were till further orders, for I was sure that in due time after daylight a responsible officer would come out to reconnoître. It was evident that we could not swim against the tide to reach the entrance. Moreover, the shores were lined with troops, and the small boats were looking for victims that might escape from the vessel. The only chance lay in remaining undiscovered until the coming of the reconnoitring boat, to which, perhaps, we might surrender without being fired on.

The moon was now low. The shadow of Socapa fell over us, and soon it was dark. The sunken vessel was bubbling up its last lingering breath. The boats' crews looking for refugees pulled closer, peering with lanterns, and again the discipline of the men was put to severe test, for time and again it seemed that the boats would come up, and the impulse to swim away was strong. A suggestion was made to cut the line and let

the catamaran drift away. This was also emphatically forbidden, for we should thus miss the reconnoitring boat, and certainly fall into less responsible hands. Here, as before, the men strictly obeyed orders,

boats would hear. It was in marked contrast with the parched lips of a few minutes before. In spite of their efforts, two of the men soon began to cough, and it seemed that we should surely be discovered. I worked my legs and

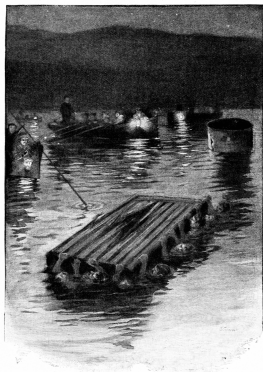
body under the raft for exercise, but, in spite of all, the shivers would come and the teeth would chatter.

We remained there probably an hour. Frogs croaked up the bight, and as dawn broke the birds began to twitter and chirp in the bushes and trees near at hand along the wooded slopes. Day came bright and beautiful. It seemed that Nature disregarded man and went on the same, serene, peaceful, and unmoved. Man's strife appeared a discord, and his tragedy received no sympathy.

About day-break a beautiful strain went up from a bugle at Punta Gorda battery. It was pitched at a high key, and rose and lingered, long drawn out, gentle and tremulous; it seemed as though an angel might be playing while

looking down in tender pity. Could this be a Spanish bugle?

Broad daylight came. The sun spotted the mountain-tops in the distance and glowed on Morro and Socapa heights. The destroyer got up anchor and drew back again up the bight. We were still undiscovered.



SPANIARDS SEARCHING FOR THE CREW WITH LANTERNS.

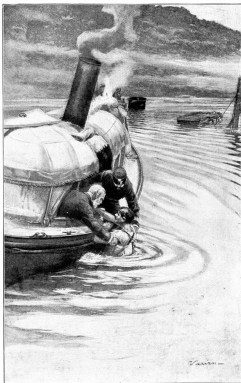
though the impulse for safety was strong to the contrary, and *saute qui peut* would have been justifiable, if it is ever justifiable.

The air was chilly and the water positively cold. In less than five minutes our teeth were chattering; so loud, indeed, did they chatter that it seemed the destroyer or the

Someone now announced: "A steam-launch is heading for us, sir." I looked around, and found that a launch of large size, with the curtains aft drawn down, was coming from the bight around Smith Cay and heading straight for us. That must be the reconnoitring party. It swerved a little to the left as if to pass around us, giving no signs of having seen us. No one was visible on board, everybody apparently being kept below the rail. When it was about thirty yards off I hailed. The launch stopped as if frightened, and backed furiously. A squad of riflemen filed out, and formed in a semi-circle on the forecastle, and came to a "load," "ready," "aim." A murmur passed about among my men: "They are going to shoot us." A bitter thought flashed through my mind: "The miserable cowards! A brave nation will learn of this, and call for an account." But the volley did not follow. The aim must have been for caution only, and it was apparent that there must be an officer on board in control.

I called out in a strong voice to know if there was not an officer in the boat; if so, an American officer wished to speak with him with a view to surrendering himself and seamen as prisoners of war. The curtain was raised; an officer leaned out and waved his hand, and the rifles came down. I struck out for the launch, and climbed on board aft with the assistance of the officer, who, hours afterwards, we learned was Admiral Cervera himself. With him were two other officers, his juniors. To him I surrendered myself

and the men, taking off my revolver-belt, glasses, canteen, and life-preserver. The officers looked astonished at first, perhaps at the singular uniforms and the begrimed condition of us all, due to the fine coal and oil that came to the surface; then a current of kindness seemed to pass over them, and they exclaimed: "¡Valiente!" Then the launch steamed up to the catamaran, and the men climbed on board, the two who had been coughing being in the last stages of exhaustion and requiring to be lifted. We were prisoners in Spanish hands.



THE RESCUE BY ADMIRAL CERVERA.

A Master of Craft.

By W. W. JACOBS.

III.



CAPTAIN FLOWER, learning through the medium of Tim that the coast was clear, came on deck at Limehouse, and took charge of his ship with a stateliness significant of an uneasy conscience. He noticed with growing indignation that the mate's attitude was rather that of an accomplice than a subordinate, and that the crew looked his way far oftener than was necessary or desirable.

"I told her we were going to France," said the mate, in an impressive whisper.

"Her?" said Flower, curly. "Who?"

"The lady you didn't want to see," said Fraser, restlessly.

"You let your ideas run away with you, Jack," said Flower, yawning. "It wasn't likely I was going to turn out and dress to see any girl you liked to invite aboard."

"Or even to bawl at them through the speaking-trumpet," said Fraser, looking at him steadily.

"What sort o' looking girl was she?" inquired Flower, craning his neck to see what was in front of him.

"Looked like a girl who meant to find the man she wanted, if she spent ten years over it," said the mate, grimly. "I'll bet you an even five shillings, cap'n, that she finds this Mr. Robinson before six weeks are out—whatever his other name is."

"Maybe," said Flower, carelessly.

"It's her first visit to the *Swan*, but not the last, you mark my words," said Fraser, solemnly. "If she wants this rascal Robinson—"

"What?" interrupted Flower, sharply.

"I say if she wants this rascal Robinson," repeated the mate, with relish, "she'll naturally come where she saw the last trace of him."

Captain Flower grunted.

"Women never think," continued Fraser, judicially, "or else she'd be glad to get rid of such a confounded scoundrel."

"What do you know about him?" demanded Flower.

"I know what she told me," said Fraser; "the idea of a man leaving a poor girl in a cake-shop and doing a bolt. He'll be punished for it, I know. He's a thoughtless, inconsiderate fellow, but one of the best-hearted chaps in the world, and I guess I'll do the best I can for him."

Flower grinned safely in the darkness. "And any little help I can give you, Jack, I'll give freely," he said, softly. "We'll talk it over at breakfast."

The mate took the hint, and, moving off, folded his arms on the taffrail, and, looking idly astern, fell into a reverie. Like the Pharisee, he felt thankful that he was not as other men, and dimly pitied the skipper and his prosaic entanglements, as he thought of Poppy. He looked behind at the dark and silent city, and felt a new affection for it, as he reflected that she was sleeping there.

The two men commenced their breakfast in silence, the skipper eating with a zest which caused the mate to allude impatiently to the last breakfasts of condemned men.

"Shut the skylight, Jack," said the skipper, at length, as he poured out his third cup of coffee.

Fraser complied, and resuming his seat gazed at him with almost indecent expectancy. The skipper dropped some sugar into his coffee, and stirring it in a meditative fashion, sighed gently.

"I've been making a fool of myself, Jack," he said, at length. "I was always one to be fond of a little bit of adventure, but this goes a little too far even for me."

"But what did you get engaged to her for?" inquired Fraser.

Flower shook his head. "She fell violently in love with me," he said, mournfully. "She keeps the Blue Posts up at Chelsea. Her father left it to her. She manages her step-mother and her brother and everybody else. I was just a child in her hands. You know my easy-going nature."

"But you made love to her," expostulated the mate.

"In a way, I suppose I did," admitted the other. "I don't know now whether she could have me up for breach of promise, because when I asked her I did it this way. I said, 'Will you be Mrs. Robinson?' What do you think?"

"I should think it would make it harder for you," said Fraser. "But didn't you remember Miss Banks while all this was going on?"

"In a way," said Flower, "yes—in a way. But after a man's been engaged to a woman nine years, it's very easy to forget, and every year makes it easier. Besides, I was only a boy when I was engaged to her."

"Twenty-eight," said Fraser.

"Anyway, I wasn't old enough to know my own mind," said Flower, "and my uncle and old Mrs. Banks made it up between them. They arranged everything, and I can't afford to offend the old man. If I married Miss Tipping—that's the Blue Posts girl—he'd leave his money away from me; and if I marry Elizabeth, Miss Tipping'll have me up for breach of promise—if she finds me."

"If you're not very careful," said Fraser, impressively, "you'll lose both of 'em."

The skipper leaned over the table, and glanced carefully round. "Just what I want to do," he said, in a low voice. "I'm engaged to another girl."

"What?" cried the mate, raising his voice. "Three?"

"Three," repeated the skipper. "Only three," he added, hastily, as he saw a question trembling on the other's lips.

"I'm ashamed of you," said the latter, severely; "you ought to know better."

"I don't want any of your preaching, Jack," said the skipper, briskly; "and, what's more, I won't have it. I deserve more pity than blame."

"You'll want all you can get," said Fraser, ominously. "And does the other girl know of any of the others?"

"Of either of the others—no," corrected Flower. "Of course, none of them know. You don't think I'm a fool, do you?"

"Who is number three?" inquired the mate, suddenly.

"Poppy Tyrell," replied the other.

"Oh," said Fraser, trying to speak unconcernedly; "the girl who came here last evening?"

Flower nodded. "She's the one I'm going to marry," he said, colouring. "I'd sooner marry her than command a liner. I'll marry her if I lose every penny I'm going to have, but I'm not going to lose the money if I can help it. I want both."

The mate baled out his cup with a spoon and put the contents into the saucer.

"I'm a sort of guardian to her," said Flower. "Her father, Captain Tyrell, died about a year ago, and I promised him I'd look after her and marry her. It's a sacred promise."

"Besides, you want to," said Fraser, by no means in the mood to allow his superior any credit in the matter, "else you wouldn't do it."

"You don't know me, Jack," said the skipper, more in sorrow than in anger.

"No, I didn't think you were quite so bad," said the mate, slowly. "Is—Miss Tyrell—fond of you?"

"Of course she is," said Flower, indignantly; "they all are, that's the worst of it. You were never much of a favourite with the sex, Jack, were you?"

Fraser shook his head, and, the saucer being full, spooned the contents slowly back into the cup again.

"Captain Tyrell leave any money?" he inquired.

"Other way about," replied Flower. "I lent him, altogether, close on a hundred pounds. He was a man of very good position, but he took to drink and lost his ship and his self-respect, and all he left behind was his debts and his daughter."

"Well, you're in a tight place," said Fraser, "and I don't see how you're going to get out of it. Miss Tipping's got a bit of a clue to you now, and if she once discovers you, you're done. Besides, suppose Miss Tyrell finds anything out?"

"It's all excitement," said Flower, cheerfully. "I've been in worse scrapes than this and always got out of 'em. I don't like a quiet life. I never worry about things, Jack, because I've noticed that the things people worry about never happen."

"Well, if I were you, then," said the other,



emphasizing his point with the spoon, "I should just worry as much as I could about it. I'd get up worrying and I'd go to bed worrying. I'd worry about it in my sleep."

"I shall come out of it all right," said Flower. "I rather enjoy it. There's Gibson would marry Elizabeth like a shot if she'd have him; but, of course, she won't look at him while I'm above ground. I have thought of getting somebody to tell Elizabeth a lot of lies about me."

"Why, wouldn't the truth do?" inquired the mate, artlessly.

The skipper turned a deaf ear. "But she wouldn't believe a word against me," he said, with mournful pride, as he rose and went on deck. "She trusts me too much."

From his knitted brows as he steered, it was evident, despite his confidence, that this amiable weakness on the part of Miss Banks was causing him some anxiety, a condition which was not lessened by the considerate behaviour of the mate, who, when any fresh complication suggested itself to him, dutifully submitted it to his commander.

"I shall be all right," said Flower, confidently, as they entered the river the following afternoon and sailed slowly along the narrow channel which wound its sluggish way through an expanse of mud-banks to Seabridge.

The mate, who was suffering from symptoms hitherto unknown to him, made no reply. His gaze wandered idly from the sloping uplands stretching away into dim country on the starboard side, to the little church-crowned town ahead, with its outlying malt-houses and

neglected, grass-grown quay. A couple of moribund ship's boats lay rotting in the mud, and the skeleton of a fishing-boat completed the picture. For the first time perhaps in his life, the landscape struck him as dull and dreary.

Two men of soft and restful movements appeared on the quay as they approached, and with the slowness characteristic of the best work, helped to make them fast in front of the red-tiled barn which served as a warehouse. Then Captain Flower, after descending to the cabin to make the brief shore-going toilet necessary for Seabridge society, turned to give a last word to the mate.

"I'm not one to care much what's said about me, Jack," he began, by way of preface.

"That's a good job for you," said Fraser, slowly.

"Same time, let the hands know I wish 'em to keep their mouths shut," pursued the skipper; "just tell them it was a girl that you knew, and I don't want it talked about for fear of getting you into trouble. Keep me out of it; that's all I ask."

"If cheek will pull you through," said Fraser, with a slight display of emotion, "you'll do. Perhaps I'd better say that Miss Tyrell came to see me, too. How would you like that?"

"Ah, it would be as well," said Flower, heartily. "I never thought of it."

He stepped ashore, and at an easy pace walked along the steep road which led to the houses above. The afternoon was merging into evening, and a pleasant stillness was in

the air. Menfolk working in their cottage gardens saluted him as he passed, and the occasional whiteness of a face at the back of a window indicated an interest in his affairs on the part of the fairer citizens of Seabridge. At the gate of the first of an ancient row of cottages, conveniently situated within hail of The Grapes, The Thorn, and The Swan, he paused,



SEABRIDGE.

and, walking up the trim-kept garden path, knocked at the door.

It was opened by a stranger—a woman of early middle age, dressed in a style to which the inhabitants of the row had long been unaccustomed. The practised eye of the skipper at once classed her as "rather good-looking."

"Captain Barber's in the garden," she said, smiling. "He wasn't expecting you'd be up just yet."

The skipper followed her in silence, and, after shaking hands with the short, red-faced man with the grey beard and shaven lip, who sat with a paper on his knee, stood watching in blank astonishment as the stranger carefully filled the old man's pipe and gave him a light. Their eyes meeting, the uncle winked solemnly at the nephew.

"This is Mrs. Church," he said, slowly; "this is my nevy, Cap'n Fred Flower."

"I should have known him anywhere," declared Mrs. Church; "the likeness is wonderful."

Captain Barber chuckled—loudly enough for them to hear.

"Me and Mrs. Church have been watering the flowers," he said. "Give 'em a good watering, we have."

"I never really knew before what a lot there was in watering," admitted Mrs. Church.

"There's a right way and a wrong in doing everything," said Captain Barber, severely; "most people chooses the wrong. If it wasn't so, those of us who have got on, wouldn't have got on."

"That's very true," said Mrs. Church, shaking her head.

"And them as haven't got on would have got on," said the philosopher, following up his train of thought. "If you would just go out and get them things I spoke to you about, Mrs. Church, we shall be all right."

"Who is it?" inquired the nephew, as soon as she had gone.

Captain Barber looked stealthily round, and, for the second time that evening, winked at his nephew.

"A visitor?" said Flower.

Captain Barber winked again, and then laughed into his pipe until it gurgled.

"It's a little plan o' mine," he said, when he had become a little more composed.

"She's my housekeeper."

"Housekeeper?" repeated the astonished Flower.

"Bein' all alone here," said Uncle Barber, "I think a lot. I sit an' think until I get an idea. It comes quite sudden like, and I wonder I never thought of it before."

"But what did you want a housekeeper for?" inquired his nephew. "Where's Lizzie?"

"I got rid of her," said Captain Barber. "I got a housekeeper because I thought it



"I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HIM ANYWHERE."

was time you got married. Now do you see?"

"No," said Flower, shortly.

Captain Barber laughed softly and, relighting his pipe which had gone out, leaned back in his chair and again winked at his indignant nephew.

"Mrs. Banks," he said, suggestively.

His nephew gazed at him blankly.

Captain Barber, sighing good-naturedly at his dulness, turned his chair a bit and explained the situation.

"Mrs. Banks won't let you and Elizabeth marry till she's gone," said he.

His nephew nodded.

"I've been at her ever so long," said the

other, "but she's firm. Now I'm trying artfulness. I've got a good-looking house-keeper—she's the pick o' seventeen what all come here Wednesday morning—and I'm making love to her."

"Making love to her," shouted his nephew, gazing wildly at the venerable bald head with the smoking-cap resting on one huge ear.

"Making love to her," repeated Captain Barber, with a satisfied air. "What'll happen? Mrs. Banks, to prevent me getting married, as she thinks, will give her consent to you an' Elizabeth getting tied up."

"Haven't you ever heard of

Barber, thoughtfully. "I can't say as I find it disagreeable. I was always one to take a little notice of the sects."

He got up to go indoors. "Never mind about them," he said, as his nephew was about to follow with the chair and his tobacco-jar; "Mrs. Church likes to do that herself, and she'd be disappointed if anybody else did it."

His nephew followed him to the house in silence, listening later on with a gloomy feeling of alarm to the conversation at the supper-table. The *role* of gooseberry was new to him, and when Mrs.

Church got up from the table for the sole purpose of proving her contention that Captain Barber looked better in his black velvet smoking-cap than the one he was wearing, he was almost on the point of exceeding his duties.

He took the mate into his confidence the next day, and asked him what he thought of it. Fraser said that it was evidently in the blood, and, being pressed with some heat for an explanation, said

that he meant Captain Barber's blood.

"It's bad, any way I look at it," said Flower; "it may bring matters between me and Elizabeth to a head, or it may end in my uncle marrying the woman."

"Very likely both," said Fraser, cheerfully. "Is this Mrs. Church good-looking?"

"I can hardly say," said Flower, pondering.

"Well, good-looking enough for you to feel inclined to take any notice of her?" asked the mate.

"When you can talk seriously," said the skipper, in great wrath, "I'll be pleased to answer you. Just at present I don't feel in the sort of temper to be made fun of."

He walked off in dudgeon, and, until they were on their way to London again, treated the mate with marked coldness. Then the necessity of talking to somebody about his own troubles and his uncle's idiosyncrasy put the



"THE PICK OF SEVENTEEN."

breach of promise cases?" asked his nephew, aghast.

"There's no fear o' that," said Captain Barber, confidently. "It's all right with Mrs. Church: she's a widdier. A widdier ain't like a young girl: she knows you don't mean anything."

It was useless to argue with such stupendous folly; Captain Flower tried another tack.

"And suppose Mrs. Church gets fond of you," he said, gravely. "It doesn't seem right to trifle with a woman's affections like that."

"I won't go too far," said the lady-killer in the smoking-cap, reassuringly.

"Elizabeth and her mother are still away, I suppose?" said Flower, after a pause.

His uncle nodded.

"So, of course, you needn't do much love-making till they come back," said his nephew; "it's waste of time, isn't it?"

"I'll just keep my hand in," said Captain

two men on their old footing. In the quietness of the cabin, over a satisfying pipe, he planned out in a kindly and generous spirit careers for both the ladies he was not going to marry. The only thing that was wanted to complete their happiness, and his, was that they should fall in with the measures proposed.

IV.

AT No. 5, Liston Street, Poppy Tyrell sat at the open window of her room reading. The outside air was pleasant, despite the fact that Poplar is a somewhat crowded neighbourhood, and it was rendered more pleasant by comparison with the atmosphere inside, which from a warm, soft smell not to be described by comparison, suggested washing. In the stone-paved yard beneath the window a small daughter of the house hung out garments of various hues and shapes, while inside, in the scullery, the master of the house was doing the family washing with all the secrecy and trepidation of one engaged in an unlawful task. The Wheeler family was a large one, and the wash heavy, and besides misadventures to one or two garments, sorted out for further consideration, the small girl was severely critical about the colour, averring sharply that she was almost ashamed to put them on the line.

"They'll dry clean," said her father, wiping his brow with the upper part of his arm, the only part which was dry; "and if they don't we must tell your mother that the line came down. I'll show these to her now."

He took up the wet clothes and, cautiously leaving the scullery, crossed the passage to the parlour, where Mrs Wheeler, a confirmed invalid, was lying on a ramshackle sofa darning socks. Mr. Wheeler coughed to attract her attention, and with an apologetic expression of visage held up a small pink

garment of the knickerbocker species, and prepared for the worst.

"They've never shrunk like that?" said Mrs. Wheeler, starting up.

"They have," said her husband, "all by itself," he added, in hasty self-defence.

"You've had it in the soda," said Mrs. Wheeler, disregarding.

"I've not," said Mr. Wheeler, vehemently. "I've got the two tubs there, flannels in one without soda, the other things in the other with soda. It's bad stuff, that's what it is. I thought I'd show you."

"It's management they want," said Mrs. Wheeler, wearily; "it's the touch you have to give 'em. I can't explain, but I know they wouldn't have gone like that if I'd done 'em. What's that you're hiding behind you?"

Thus attacked, Mr. Wheeler produced his other hand, and shaking out a blue and white shirt, showed how the blue had been wandering over the white territory, and how the white had apparently accepted a permanent occupation.

"What do you say to that?" he inquired, desperately.

"You'd better ask Bob what he says," said his wife, aghast; "you know how pertickler he is, too. I told you as plain as a woman could speak not to boil that shirt."

"Well, it can't be helped," said Mr.

Wheeler, with a philosophy he hoped his son would imitate. "I wasn't brought up to the washing, Polly."

"It's a sin to spoil good things like that," said Mrs. Wheeler, fretfully. "Bob's quite the gentleman—he will buy such expensive shirts. Take it away, I can't bear to look at it."

Mr. Wheeler, considerably crestfallen, was about to obey, when he was startled by a knock at the door.

"That's Captain Flower, I expect," said



"DOING THE FAMILY WASHING."

his wife, hastily; "he's going to take Poppy and Emma to a theatre to-night. Don't let him see you in that state, Peter."

But Mr. Wheeler was already fumbling at the strings of his apron, and, despairing of undoing it, broke the string, and pitched it with the other clothes under the sofa and hastily donned his coat.

"Good-evening," said Flower, as Mr. Wheeler opened the door; "this is my mate."

"Glad to see you, sir," said Mr. Wheeler.



"'GOOD EVENING,' SAID FLOWER; 'THIS IS MY MATE.'"

The mate made his acknowledgments, and having shaken hands, carefully wiped his down the leg of his trousers.

"Moist hand you've got, Wheeler," said Flower, who had been doing the same thing.

"Got some dye on 'em at the docks," said Wheeler, glibly. "I've 'ad 'em in soak."

Flower nodded, and after a brief exchange of courtesies with Mrs. Wheeler as he passed the door, led the way up the narrow staircase to Miss Tyrell's room.

"I brought him with me, so that he'll be company for Emma Wheeler," said the skipper, as Fraser shook hands with her, "and you must look sharp if you want to get good seats."

"I'm ready all but my hat and jacket," said Poppy, "and Emma's in her room getting ready, too. All the children are up there helping her."

Fraser opened his eyes at such a toilet, and began secretly to wish that he had paid more attention to his own.

"I hope you're not shy?" said Miss Tyrell, who found his steadfast gaze somewhat embarrassing.

Fraser shook his head. "No, I'm not shy," he said, quietly.

"Because Emma didn't know you were coming," continued Miss Tyrell, "and she's always shy. So you must be bold, you know."

The mate nodded as confidently as he could. "Shyness has never been one of my failings," he said, nervously.

Further conversation was rendered difficult, if not impossible, by one which now took place outside. It was conducted between a small Wheeler on the top of the stairs and Mrs. Wheeler in the parlour below. The subject was hairpins, an article in which it appeared Miss Wheeler was lamentably deficient, owing, it was suggested, to a weakness of Mrs. Wheeler's for picking up stray ones and putting in her hair. The conversation ended in Mrs. Wheeler, whose thin voice was heard hotly combating these charges, parting with six, without prejudice; and a few minutes later Miss Wheeler, somewhat flushed, entered the room and was introduced to the mate.

"All ready?" inquired Flower, as Miss Tyrell drew on her gloves.

They went downstairs in single file, the builder of the house having left no option in the matter, while the small Wheelers, breathing hard with excitement, watched them over the balusters. Outside the house the two ladies paired off, leaving the two men to follow behind.

The mate noticed, with a strong sense of his own unworthiness, that the two ladies seemed thoroughly engrossed in each other's company, and oblivious to all else. A suggestion from Flower that he should close up and take off Miss Wheeler seemed to him to border upon audacity, but he meekly followed Flower as that bold mariner ranged himself alongside the girls, and taking two steps on the curb and three in the gutter, walked along for some time trying to think of something to say.

"There ain't room for four abreast," said Flower, who had been scraping against the wall. "We'd better split up into twos."

At the suggestion the ladies drifted apart, and Flower, taking Miss Tyrell's arm, left the mate behind with Miss Wheeler, nervously wondering whether he ought to do the same.

"I hope it won't rain," he said, at last.

"I hope not," said Miss Wheeler, glancing up at a sky which was absolutely cloudless.

"So bad for ladies' dresses," continued the mate.

"What is?" inquired Miss Wheeler, who had covered some distance since the last remark.

"Rain," said the mate, quite freshly. "I don't think we shall have any, though."

Miss Wheeler, whose life had been passed in a neighbourhood in which there was only one explanation for such conduct, concluded that he had been drinking, and, closing her lips tightly, said no more until they reached the theatre.

"Oh, they're going in," she said, quickly; "we shall get a bad seat."

"Hurry up," cried Flower, beckoning.

"I'll pay," whispered the mate.

"No, I will," said Flower. "Well, you pay for one and I'll pay for one, then."

He pushed his way to the window and bought a couple of pit-stalls; the mate, who had not consulted him, bought upper-circles, and, with a glance at the ladies, pushed open the swing-doors.

"Come on," he said, excitedly; and several people racing up the broad, stone stairs, he and Miss Tyrell raced with them.

"Round this side," he cried, hastily, as he gave up the tickets, and, followed by Miss Tyrell, hastily secured a couple of seats at the end of the front row.

"Best seats in the house almost," said Poppy, cheerfully.

"Where are the others?" said Fraser, looking round.

"Coming on behind, I suppose," said Poppy, glancing over her shoulder.

"I'll change places when they arrive," said the other, apologetically; "something's detained them, I should think. I hope they're not waiting for us."

He stood looking about him uneasily as the seats behind rapidly filled, and closely scanned their occupants, and then, leaving his hat on the seat, walked back in perplexity to the door.

"Never mind," said Miss Tyrell, quietly, as he came back. "I daresay they'll find us."

Fraser bought a programme and sat down, the brim of Miss Tyrell's hat touching his

face as she bent to peruse it. With her small gloved finger she pointed out the leading characters, and taking no notice of his restlessness, began to chat gaily about the plays she had seen, until a tuning of violins from the orchestra caused her to lean forward, her lips parted and her eyes beaming with anticipation.

"I do hope the others have got good seats," she said, softly, as the overture finished; "that's everything, isn't it?"

"I hope so," said Fraser.

He leaned forward, excitedly. Not because the curtain was rising, but because he had just caught sight of a figure standing up in the centre of the pit-stalls. He had just time to call his companion's attention to it when the figure, in deference to the threats and entreaties of the people behind, sat down and was lost in the crowd.

"They ~~have~~ got good seats," said Miss Tyrell. "I'm so glad. What a beautiful scene."

The mate, stifling his misgivings, gave himself up to the enjoyment of the situation, which included answering the breathless whispers of his neighbour when she missed a sentence, and helping her to discover the identity of the characters from the programme as they appeared.

"I should like it all over again," said Miss Tyrell, sitting back in her seat, as the curtain fell on the first act.

Fraser agreed with her. He was closely watching the pit-stalls. In the general movement on the part of the audience which followed the lowering of the curtain, the master of the *Row* was the first on his feet.

"I'll go down and send him up," said Fraser, rising.

Miss Tyrell demurred, and revealed an unsuspected timidity of character. "I don't like being left here all alone," she remarked. "Wait till they see us."

She spoke in the plural, for Miss Wheeler, who found the skipper exceedingly had company, had also risen, and was scrutinizing the house with a gaze hardly less eager than his own. A suggestion of the mate that he should wave his handkerchief was promptly negatived by Miss Tyrell, on the ground that it would not be the correct thing to do in the upper-circle, and they were still undiscovered when the curtain went up for the second act, and strong and willing hands from behind thrust the skipper back into his seat.

"I expect you'll catch it," said Miss Tyrell,

softly, as the performance came to an end; "we'd better go down and wait for them outside. I never enjoyed a piece so much."

The mate rose and mingled with the crowd, conscious of a little occasional clutch at his sleeve whenever other people threatened to come between them. Outside the crowd dispersed slowly, and it was some minutes before they discovered a small but compact knot of two waiting for them.

"Where the——" began Flower.

"I hope you enjoyed the performance, Captain



"THE CROWD DISPERSED SLOWLY."

Flower," said Miss Tyrell, drawing herself up with some dignity. "I didn't know that I was supposed to look out for myself all the evening. If it hadn't been for Mr. Fraser I should have been all alone."

She looked hard at Miss Wheeler as she spoke, and the couple from the pit-stalls reddened with indignation at being so misunderstood.

"I'm sure I didn't want him," said Miss Wheeler, hastily. "Two or three times I thought there would have been a fight with the people behind."

"Oh, it doesn't matter," said Miss Tyrell,

composedly. "Well, it's no good standing here. We'd better get home."

She walked off with the mate, leaving the couple behind, who realized that appearances were against them, to follow at their leisure. Conversation was mostly on her side, the mate being too much occupied with his defence to make any very long or very coherent replies.

They reached Liston Street at last, and separated at the door, Miss Tyrell shaking hands with the skipper in a way which conveyed in the fullest

possible manner her opinion of his behaviour that evening. A bright smile and a genial hand-shake were reserved for the mate.

"And now," said the incensed skipper, breathing deeply as the door closed and they walked up Liston Street, "what the deuce do you mean by it?"

"Mean by what?" demanded the mate, who, after much thought, had decided to take

a leaf out of Miss Tyrell's book.

"Mean by leaving me in another part of the house with that Wheeler girl while you and my intended went off together?" growled Flower, ferociously.

"Well, I could only think you wanted it," said Fraser, in a firm voice.

"If that?" demanded the other, hardly able to believe his ears.

"I thought you wanted Miss Wheeler for number four," said the mate, calmly. "You know what a chap you are, cap'n."

His companion stopped and regarded him in speechless amaze, then realizing a vocabulary to which Miss Wheeler had acted as a safety-valve all the evening, he turned up a side-street and stamped his way back to the *Fort* alone.

(To be continued.)

In Nature's Workshop.

By GRANT ALLEN.

VI.—ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE HEDGEHOGS.



MAN was not the first inventor of coats of mail and ironclads. Two types of defensive armour are common in nature. The first type almost exactly resembles the jointed plate-armour of mediæval knights: one sees this kind well exemplified in the armadillo and the lobster; a little less well in the tortoise, the beetle, and many hard-shelled insects. The second type has no exact human analogue: it is offensive and defensive at one and the same time; one sees it exhibited in the porcupine, the hedgehog, the bumble, the thistle, and an immense variety of other plants and animals. With this second group the armour consists, not of plates, but of prickly spines or thorns, which repel assailants by wounding the tender flesh of the mouth or lips. Such prickliness of surface is perhaps the commonest among all the protective devices invented by living creatures:

it is remarkable for its universal diffusion both in various countries and in various classes. There are insect hedgehogs and vegetable porcupines. Indeed, scarcely a great order of plants or animals can be named which does not contain at least one or two such prickly or thorny species.

The common English hedgehog (shown in No. 1 in two characteristic attitudes) makes a good example of the prickly-armoured class with which to begin the examination of this interesting series. Everybody is tolerably familiar with the hedgehog's appearance—a squat, square, inquisitive little creature, one of nature's low comedians, with very short

legs and no tail to speak of, but covered on his back and upper surface with dirty white spines, which merge more or less into indefinite blackness. But if he is comic to us, he is serious to himself. Slow and sedate in all his movements, your hedgehog seldom does anything so undignified as to run: to say the truth, he is a poor racer; he is not built for haste, but strolls calmly along on his bandy legs, showing little sense of fear even when surprised on the open, for he is well aware that his coat of spines amply suffices to secure him from aggression. The hare trusts to his speed, the rabbit to his burrow; but the hedgehog relies upon his prickles for protection, and scorns to flee when he can

oppose to every foe an effective passive resistance. His bright, beady-black eyes form his one claim to beauty: they gleam with cunning: save for them, he is a dingy and unattractive animal. But though he belongs to a very ancient and honourable family—



1.—HEDGEHOG, ROLLED AND UNROLLED.

that of the insect-eaters—long since superseded in most of the high places of the earth by younger and more advanced types, he still manages to hold his own in the struggle for life against all competitors, mainly by virtue of his excellent suit of spiny armour.

The hedgehog is, on the whole, a nocturnal animal, like most of this early group of insectivores to which he belongs. Now, as a class, the insectivores have been driven from the best positions in nature's hierarchy by the keen competition of the rodents, the ruminants, and the carnivores; they have been compelled to earn a precarious living in

out-of-the-way corners by night prowling. They are the gipsies and tinkers, the tramps and beggars of the animal economy. Our English hedgehog, one of the luckiest members of this persecuted class, lives usually in some comfortable hole in a hedge or copse, and sleeps away the daytime in owl-like seclusion. When night comes, however, he sallies forth on the hunt, in search of beetles and other hard-shelled insects, which form his staple diet, and for crushing which his solid set of grinders admirably adapts him. In winter, when insect food fails, he hibernates in his lair, rolling himself up in a thick blanket of dead leaves for warmth: his spines here stand him in good stead for a different function from that of mere defence, for he fastens the leaves on them as if they were pins, and so keeps himself warm and dry through the snows and frosts and rains of winter. He has a tramp's true instinct: he knows how to make the best of poor surroundings.

With the first genial showers of April, our prickly friend turns out once more, very thin and hungry, in quest of the insects which are then just emerging from their burst cocoons or their snug winter quarters. Often enough at this season he comes forth from his nest with a layer or two of leaves still impaled upon his prickles, in which condition he cuts a most quaint and amusing figure. Every evening he shuffles about awkwardly in search of his prey, which consists mainly of beetles, relieved by a pleasing variety of slugs, snails, worms, frogs, and young birds, as well as an occasional egg, and now and again a snake or a shrew-mouse. Though despised by man, in his own small hedgerow world he is an undisputed tyrant, and has few real enemies. Most higher animals are afraid to tackle him. A dog will just sniff at him with a dubious air of inquiry, but when the spines prick his tender nose, he draws back disgusted, and refuses to join battle with the uncanny, bow-legged creature. Indeed, the hedgehog's only serious foe is the owl, which has invented a special device for seizing him unawares. Almost all other mouse and rat-eating species fear to engage so well-armed an enemy.

The difficulty of the attack lies, of course, in his spines, a first line of defence which one may regard as typical of the tactics adopted among the whole group of prickly-bearing animals. These spines are hard in texture, and very sharp at the point: cylindrical in shape, and an inch long or thereabouts. They are lightly embedded in the

skin, and are so arranged that they can be erected at will into a most aggressive position. This trick of raising the spines is managed by an extremely interesting mechanism, something like the muscle by means of which certain gifted persons (chiefly schoolboys) can move and ruffle up the skin and hair of the head just above the temples, only on a much more extended scale of organization. The set of muscles thus specialized enables the animal to curl itself about in the tightest fashion. When an enemy approaches, the hedgehog does not flinch: he simply rolls himself up into a round ball. The South American armadillo does much the same thing: only, when the armadillo is rolled up, he becomes a mere hard sphere, something like a bomb-shell: whereas the hedgehog becomes an unapproachable globe of fixed bayonets. He tucks his head and legs well out of harm's way under his lower surface, and exposes only the spiny upper portion of his back and body. A great band of specialized muscle, assisted by several subsidiary belts, draws his supple skin tight over his whole body, and at the same time points the sharp ends of the spines radially outward. When a hedgehog is thus rolled up into his attitude of passive defence, no animal on earth can do anything with him in fair open fight, though some few of them have invented mean underhand tricks for getting round him by artifice. Most of these are too nasty for full description. Rolling him into water and drowning him is one of the least objectionable: but the method pursued by his chief human foe, the gipsy, though extremely cruel, is so quaintly clever that it seems to deserve a passing mention.

Gipsies never despise any form of wild food, and they have hit upon a perfidious dodge for utilizing the hedgehog. They catch him alive, which is always easy enough: for the little beast, trusting to his array of spines, seldom runs away when attacked, but contents himself with rolling himself up into his spherical and apparently lifeless condition. The season for hedgehogs is at the end of autumn, when the animal has fattened himself for his winter sleep. Kneading a ball of moist clay, the gipsies embed the poor creature in it entire, so that spines and all are completely covered. Then they lay the ball in their fire, and roast the unhappy animal alive. As soon as the clay cracks, the hedgehog is cooked: they break the ball, and the skin comes off whole, spines, clay, and all, leaving the steaming

hot body baked and savoury in the middle. I mention this curious but hateful trick because it is very characteristic of the sort of plan which many animals have adopted for getting rid of the spines or hairs in caterpillars and other protected but juicy creatures. What man does intelligently, that birds and quadrupeds also do and did before him by inherited and acquired instinct.

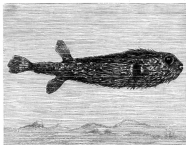
When the little hedgehogs are first born, the prickles are mere knobs, quite soft and flexible. As the puppies grow older the spines harden and become sharp at the point, and the little beasts acquire by degrees the power of rolling themselves into a ball like their parents. This power serves another purpose, however, besides that of mere defence: the spines and skin together form an elastic mass, so that when the animal wants to throw itself down a bank or precipice it rolls itself up into its sphere-like form and then trundles itself over the edge, blindfold and fearless, trusting to its elasticity to break the fall. When it reaches the bottom it uncoils itself quietly and waddles off about its business as if nothing had happened. The beady black eyes tell the truth as to their owner's intelligence: the hedgehog is an extremely clever and contriving creature.

It is interesting to note, too, that while in the mainland of the great continents—Europe, Asia, Africa—the hedgehogs and their like are all spiny, and possess the characteristic power of rolling themselves up into a perfect sphere, there are several half-developed hedgehog-like creatures, belated in various outlying islands, which are only rough sketches or imperfect foreshadowings of the fully-evolved type. Some of these, like the bulau of Sumatra, have just a few stiff bristles scattered about here and there among the hairs of the back; others, more advanced, like the Madagascar tanrec, have strong and stiff spines, but cannot roll themselves up into a perfect sphere like the true hedgehogs. Intermediate species also occur which more and more closely approach our European

pattern. It is probable that these interesting undeveloped creatures represent arrested ancestral forms of our own English type: but that while in the great continents, the stress of competition has resulted at last in producing our highly-evolved form, a few outlying groups in isolated lands (such as Haiti and Mauritius) have retained to this day the earlier features of certain primitive stages in the history and evolution of the hedgehog family. We have here, so to speak, all the "missing links" in the development of the group, preserved for our edification, like living fossils, in remote and scattered oceanic islands. Even so, while Paris, London, New York, and Calcutta are civilized cities, the Andaman Islander and the Melanesians of the Pacific represent in our midst the primeval savage.

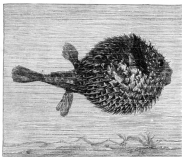
But the sea has its hedgehogs no less than the land: and the close similarity between the habits and manners of the two is a beautiful exemplification of the general principle that similar conditions produce similar effects even in quite unrelated plants and animals. The most interesting sea-hedgehog is a kind of globe-fish, and it is represented in its ordinary elongated swimming condition in No. 2. The porcupine-

fish, as this odd creature is often called, has a smooth, scaleless skin, thickly covered at intervals with sharp and stout spines. When the fish is swimming freely about in search of food, the spines are retracted, exactly as in the hedgehog, and point inoffensively backward. But let an enemy come in view, and, hi-



2.—A SEA HEDGEHOG, THE GLOBE-FISH, SWIMMING FREELY.

presto! what a change! The porcupine-fish follows at once the tactics of his terrestrial analogue, and converts himself into a bristling ball of prickles, though by a somewhat different method. He rises to the surface and swallows in haste a quantity of air, which distends him instantly into a perfect balloon, as you see in No. 3. The skin is thus stretched tight like a drum, and the sharp spines stand out straight in every direction, forming a radial ball, exactly



3. THE GLOOM-FISH, INFLATED, WHEN DANGER THREATENS.

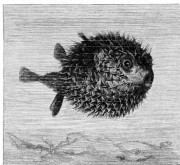
as in the case of the hedgehog. This erect and threatening condition of the spines is still better exhibited in No. 4, which shows the porcupine-fish as a very tough morsel for any aggressive shark or dogfish which may be minded to attack it. Oddly enough, the distention has one most unexpected result. When thus inflated, as if he were a Dunlop tyre, the fish becomes top-heavy, and turns upside down, floating passive on the surface with his back downwards. He does not attempt to swim, but lets wind and current carry him like a derelict vessel. Once the danger is passed, however, the fish expels the air from its mouth with a gurgling noise, and resumes its usual free swimming attitude.

Few sea-wolves of any sort will venture to attack a globe-fish in its distended state: those that do so have often reason to regret it. Darwin mentions that globe-fish have frequently been found floating, alive and unhurt, within the stomach of a shark that has swallowed them, and even that one has been known to eat its way bodily through the devourer's side, so killing its would-be murderer. This feat is rendered possible by

the very hard and sharp jaws or beak of the globe-fishes, which resemble the hedgehog in this particular too—that they crunch extremely hard food, such as coral, shell-fish, and lobster-like creatures, for which purpose their solid tooth-like jaws are admirably fitted.

It is a pet theory of mine that whatever an animal does, some plant does also in all essentials. The hedgehog and porcupine with their vegetable imitators are good instances of the truth of this rough generalization. For there are plant hedgehogs and plant porcupines as well as animal ones. The most remarkable and strictly analogous examples of these spiny plants are of course the cactuses, which may be regarded as in one sense the porcupines, and in another sense the

camels, of the vegetable world. Cactuses grow wild only in very dry and poverty-stricken deserts, not absolutely waterless indeed, but given over for many months of the year to unbroken drought, and then drenched for a short time by the torrential rains of the tropical wet season. Under these circumstances, the cactuses have learnt to store water in their own tissues exactly as the camel does. They lay by, not for a rainy day, but for a dry one. Their stems have grown extremely thick and fleshy; the outer portion is covered with a hard



4.—"WHO'S AFRAID? LET 'EM ALL COME!"

and glassy skin, which resists evaporation; and when the occasional rains occur, the provident plant sucks up all the water it can get as fast as it can suck it, and lays it by for future use in the cells of the bark and of the spongy pith which forms its interior. Protected by their layer of impermeable skin and their immense bulk from the parching sun and dry winds of the Mexican desert, the wily cactuses are thus enabled to hold out for months against continuous droughts, exactly as the camel holds out through a long march by means of the water he has similarly stored

in his capacious and spongy stomach. They are, in fact, living reservoirs, which act as tanks for their own water-supply.

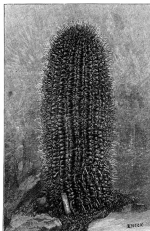
But the cactus has no green leaves; or, rather, lest some clever critic should come down upon me, after the clever critic's wont, for this too sweeping generalization, I will say more guardedly, only a few half-developed and untypical cactuses have a few green leaves of the ordinary pattern: and these few species are not adapted for the most desert conditions. For clearly in very hot and dry countries thin green leaves would be worse than useless: they would be wilted up by the heat of the sun at once, and the plant would die for want of its accustomed mouths and stomachs. Hence almost all trees and shrubs which grow in very dry and hot regions have given up producing real leaves of any sort. In the Australian desert, it is true, the trees are covered with what look like leaves, but these are in reality thick flattened leaf-stalks: and even the leaf-stalks are all placed vertically, not horizontally, on the stems—stand with their flat edge or expanded surface sideways, up and down, instead of being extended parallel to the soil, to catch the sunlight: they are thus struck by the oblique rays in the early morning and late evening, when the sun has little

power, but not by the direct and scorching rays of midday, which would burn them up and wither them. It is this peculiarity of vertical foliage (or what looks like foliage) which gives rise to the well-known shadelessness of the dreary Australian gum-tree forests. In the dry region of America, on the other hand, most of the plants have given up the vain attempt to produce leaves altogether, or even to imitate leaves by flattened branches: they let the green stem do all the work of eating and assimilating usually performed by the true foliage. That is why most cactuses have nothing that ordinary people would

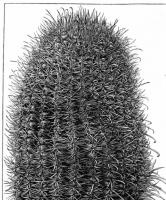
regard as bark: the whole exposed surface of the plant has to be green, because it contains the chlorophyll or living digestive material which assimilates fresh food: the cactus eats with every fold of its skin or exterior layer. In reality, this exposed portion is all bark, from a botanical point of view: and so is the greater part of the internal water-storing pith or spongy matter. But it is green bark, not brown: bark which has assumed the function of leaves under stress of circumstances.

Now, you will readily understand that, in a thirsty land, a plant so full of stored-up water as the various species of cactus must be very liable to attack from animals of all sizes. Any unarmed and unprotected kinds must thus from the very beginning of their family history have been greedily devoured by the herbivores of the desert. The consequence is that only the best protected and most hedgehog-like species have survived to our day, especially in the driest portions of the desert country. Nature is a great utilizer of odds and ends: she always finds some unexpected use for discarded organs. The cactuses, thus placed, and having nothing more for their leaves to do in the ordinary way of business, invented a new function for them by turning them into spines to protect

the precious store of internal water laid by in the spongy pith for the plant's own purposes. To deter thieves from breaking in and stealing this valuable deposit, they made their leaves ever shorter and stiffer, till at last they have assumed in many cases the form of regular rosettes of prickles, disposed in tufts over the whole surface of the plant that bears them. No. 5 shows us an excellent instance of these prickly and repellent desert types, a tall cactus which imitates in many ways a hedgehog, or still more closely a sea-urchin. No. 6 is an enlarged view of the top of the same plant, showing the thick



5.—A VEGETABLE HEDGEHOG, ONE OF THE SPINY CACTUSES.



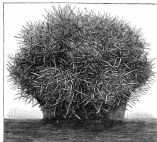
6.—TOP PART OF THE SAME, SHOWING THE ROWS OF FIXED BAYONETS.

coat of defensive spines, and the difficulty of attacking so bristling a treasure-house. Like a strong man armed, the cactus protects its vital water-supply with a serried row of weapons: it might almost be compared to a fort with an army mounting guard over its magazine, and fixed bayonets pointed in every direction. Observe how impossible it would prove to break the line anywhere: he would be a bold strategist who would venture to assault that perfectly defended position with its innumerable caltrops. The charge of the Lancers at Omdurman would be a mere trifle to it.

Nevertheless, astute enemies do sometimes manage to get the better even of these experienced vegetable tacticians. The horses that roam half-wild over the arid plains of upland Mexico will often combine to kick down the tall pillar-like cactuses which grow upright in those regions, knocking them fiercely with their hoofs, and then eating the soft and juicy pith, with its ample store of contained water. They will also trample open the globular forms which abound in the same district, and feed greedily upon the succulent interior. But only extreme thirst and hunger would drive them to tackle so dangerous a plant, and we must remember that horses are not native to Mexico or to any part of America: they were first introduced (in modern times at least) by the Spanish conquerors: therefore the cactuses

could not have been originally developed with an eye to defence against such solid-hoofed enemies. As a rule a cactus hedge is practically impervious to animals: hardly any living beast will venture to face it. Even the wild horses themselves often receive dangerous wounds while kicking cactuses, which thus avenge themselves on the invading army.

Various degrees of hedgehogginess exist, however, among the cactus group: there are more developed and less developed forms, according to the nature of the soil and the amount of rainfall or the character of the enemies to be expected locally. Some kinds, such as the leaf-like *Phyllanthus*, often grown in conservatories, are quite unarmed. Others, such as the well-known prickly pear—an American cactus now largely naturalized on the Riviera, in Italy, in Algeria, and in Syria—have comparatively few spines, though they are well beset with little groups of short sharp hairs, which break off at a touch and cause an immense amount of trouble in the hands when one rubs them. The fruit of the prickly pear is intended to be eaten: it relies upon animals for the dispersion of the seeds: it has therefore relatively few spines, but it must nevertheless be handled with caution. Other forms of cactus are progressively shorter, stouter, and more spiny, until at last, in the most exposed spots, we arrive at that most perfect of vegetable hedgehogs, the globular melon cactus, many species of which are commonly cultivated in pots in England, more for the oddity of their form than for the sake of the flowers. This quaint little creature is as round as the rolled-up hedgehog or the inflated globe-fish; and it is protected by a perfect array of thick and prickly spines. No. 7 shows one of these



7.—A STILL PRICKLIER CACTUS, ALL SPINES AND DEFENCES.

extremely dense forms, where the need for defence seems to have swallowed up the whole plant—like a military despotism, it has no time to think of anything but warlike preparations. Such types grow always in their native condition on very dry and open spots, where every living plant is eagerly devoured by the starving animals, unless it covers itself in this fashion with a regular arsenal of daggers and javelins.

It may have surprised you to be told that the spines of cactuses are in reality the last relics of the true leaves: I will return to that point a little later, and show by what gradual stages this curious transformation has been slowly effected. But for the present I want rather to insist upon the point that desert conditions almost necessarily run to the production of excessive prickliness in all sorts and conditions of plants and animals. Where water is so scarce, food is scarce too:

and where food is scarce hunger drives the few animals which can exist in the dry region to attack every living thing they come across, be it animal or vegetable. Hence, the smaller animals of deserts have need of protection just as much as the plants. Western and Southern Australia, as everybody knows, have a very dry climate, and they are provided accordingly with a most prickly and spiny fauna and flora. Their bush is sparse and extremely thorny. No. 8 shows you a very characteristic specimen of the animal forms which arise under such conditions. It is a lizard which frequents the driest and sandiest soils of that desert tract, and it is specially adapted for holding its own against the local lizard-eaters of the neighbourhood it inhabits. Science knows it by the scriptural title

of Moloch—and, indeed, it is ugly enough and repulsive enough to be called any bad names; but the Western Australians, less polite in their speech than the Royal Society, describe it familiarly as the "thorny devil." It is one mass of spines, and its head and brain

in particular are specially protected by a couple of prickly horns, bent almost like fish-hooks. The Moloch, in spite of its name, is a harmless creature: it does not attack: it uses its armour only, like the common thistle,

for defence, not defiance. But, like most prickly beasts, it knows it is practically safe from aggression, for it is as slow as the hedgehog in its movements, and basks openly on the sandhills, aware that few foes will venture to attack it.

A glance at No. 9, however, may bring into still stronger relief the point which I am labouring to show—the close analogy which

always exists between plant and animal life under similar conditions. Here we have a bush which exactly represents the thorny Moloch in the vegetable world. The desert regions of South America, indeed, are full of prickly or armour-plated animals: and in the same desert regions we get a whole group of intensely spinous and armour-plated plants and shrubs, of which No. 9 is a capital example. This curious bush, known as *Colletia*, is now fairly common in hot-houses in England, and is grown outdoors on the arid hills of the Riviera, where so many desert shrubs from Mexico, Arabia, Australia, and Peru find a congenial home. It is really the prickliest thing I know, for its branches are very stiff and its points very sharp, and I have never tried to handle one without



8.—A PRICKLY LIZARD, THE MOLOCH OR "THORNY DEVIL."



9.—A PLANT OF THE SAME TYPE—THE COLLETIA.

wounding myself severely. The same conditions which make prickly animals make prickly plants: and *Colletia* is prickliness pushed to its utmost possible limit. It is true, the sharp ends are not so numerous as in many other instances, but they are as hard as steel, and as penetrating as a surgical instrument. Nobody tries twice to fight a *Colletia*.

Our common English gorse, represented in No. 10, will help to show how foliage-leaves can be developed into mere defensive spines, as we saw with the cactuses. I have already explained in this Magazine that the young gorse seedling has trefoil leaves like a clover, and have pointed out how, as it grows older, the successive blades become sharper and sharper, until at last they assume the shape of mere stiff prickles, scarcely to be distinguished from the pointed branches on whose sides they sprout. The illustration exhibits very well the intensely protective nature of the spines, which are so arranged as to defend the flowers and buds from the attacks of enemies. Our common heather also tells one something the same tale: its leaves are spiny, and would readily enough degenerate into prickles if need were: the cactuses have only carried the same tendency a degree farther, and reduced the flat part of their leaves till nothing is left of them except the prickly termination. Imagine a holly leaf or a thistle leaf with the fleshy portion suppressed, and you have an epitome of the probable history of the cactus-spine in the course of its development from expanded foliage to defensive prickle.

Indeed, in certain types, every stage occurs between the plants and animals which are quite undefended, through the plants and animals which are defended in part only or on the most vulnerable points, down to the plants and animals which seem reduced ex-

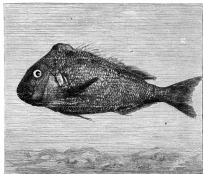
ternally, like the sea-urchin and the melon cactus, to a mere rugged mass of defensive javelins. Thus, among lizards, the iguanas have a sharp row of spines down the back only, the back being the part most exposed to attack: while others, like the horned lizards of Mexico and the southern United States, inhabiting the same dry region as the cactuses, are almost as closely covered with protective spines as the Australian Moloch. In the Arabian desert, once more, we get the thorny-tailed lizards, whose hinder portion is ringed round with prickles; and in other dry districts we find other protected kinds,

progressively varying in the stage of their armour from the simplest to the most complex in every possible gradation. So among fish, No. 11 represents a frequent type, answering to the iguana type among lizards, where a few strong spines on the crest of the back seem sufficient to

deter most would-be assailants. Our own stickle-backs, as I have pointed out before, are smaller examples of the same principle. But other kinds of fish have more and more scattered spines over the whole body, till at last we arrive at highly protected species like



10.—BRANCH OF GORSE, WITH SPINES DEFENDING THE BUDS AND FLOWERS.



11.—A FISH, DEFENDED ON THE BACK ONLY.

the inflated globe-fish, which are veritable hedgehogs both in shape and in prickliness. You may observe that the best-armed kinds are almost always globular in form, at least in their defensive attitude, and are equally covered with prickles all over, because a sphere is, of course—as a soldier would say—the hardest “formation” to attack, while the equal distribution of the spines leaves no loop-hole for approach to the most cunning assailant.

An exactly similar gradation from the unarmed through the partially armed to the highly defended can easily be traced in many groups of plants. Take for instance the thistles. Here, there are one or two species which, though they look much like other thistles both in foliage and flower, have really no actual prickles at all; the ends and angles of the leaves, while shaped as in the armed sorts, are quite soft and yielding. Then there are more advanced types which have hard prickly points to every lobe of the leaf, but still can be grasped by the smooth and unarmed stem; these kinds live mostly in rather exposed spots, but not in those where competition is fiercest and grazing animals most numerous. Last of all, we get species like the one represented in No. 12, which have the leaves prolonged down the stem by means of prickly wings, so that every portion of the plant is absolutely protected. Such sorts are developed on open commons and in boggy clay soils where pasture is abundant. In the nettle tribe, the same tactics are carried still further, for there each hair or prickle has a poison-bag at its base—a sort of snake's fang in miniature—and positively stings the invader like a bee or a mosquito.

This is an extreme instance of that likeness of plan which everywhere pervades plant and animal life. If we knew stings only in hornets and wasps, we should laugh at the notion that a weed could resent and resist intrusion by injecting poison into its assail-

ant: yet nettles are such common and familiar objects in a country walk, and have so often forced themselves upon our unwilling attention, that we have almost forgotten how to be astonished at the marvel of their behaviour.

The sea is, if possible, even fuller of prickly creatures than the land. Against our hawthorn bushes, our brambles, our porcupines, and our “thorny devils,” it sets an immense array of spine-bearing animals of every conceivable type and pattern. They occur in every group. The common lobster belongs merely to the armour-plated section, like the tortoises and armadillos:

but there is a well-known prickly lobster which also comes frequently into the London market, and which has its back all studded with defensive spines of the most deadly character. Similarly, most crabs have smooth shells; but there are

certain prickly devil-crabs (No. 13) which consist of one serried mass of dense spikes, and which probably never get attacked at all by any other animal. The edible prawn is not prickly all over like these crabs, but he has a saw-like beak, which must suffice to ward off most assaults of his adversaries. A great many mollusks have shells with spines and other sharp projections, and these obviously serve to defend them from their enemies. But it is among the smaller and lower sea-beasties that one finds the greatest number of prickly forms. The starfish are frequently spiny on their exposed upper surface, and the very name “sea-urchin” is equivalent to sea-hedgehog, urchin being an old-English corruption of the French *hérissé*. Most

of the sea-urchins are intensely prickly: the curious one depicted in No. 14, where it is partly deprived of its spines, to show the shell, is not so much prickly as difficult to tackle for want of a point of approach: it resembles rather a blunt arrangement of



12.—A SPINY THISTLE, WITH PRICKLES RUNNING DOWN THE STEM.



13.—THE PRICKLY CRAB.

chevaux de frise than a circle of fixed bayonets. Roughly speaking, one may say that an immense majority of the lower creatures in the sea are more or less protected in one way or another. Either, like the urchins, they have



14.—A SEA-URCHIN, WITH SOME OF THE SPINES REMOVED TO SHOW THE SHELL.

spines and spikes: or, if they are soft, like the jelly-fish, then they frequently sting: or, if they do not possess either prickles or a stinging fluid, then they are nasty to the taste, and advertise themselves as such by means of brilliant colours, as is the case with a great many sea-slugs. A walk through the galleries of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington will show you at once how extremely frequent are these prickly animals, especially in the sea. And here I will just add parenthetically that it is very little use strolling listlessly through such collections, as most people do, with a casual glance right and left at the various cases: if you want a visit to a museum to do you any good, you must select some such line of study for an afternoon as this, and go through the corridors looking out carefully for the different plants and animals which exemplify (say) this defensive prickly habit in every direction.

Even insects are often prickly, though we are a little apt to overlook the real prickliness of these smaller types, because it often does not look to our clumsy big eyes much more than mere hairiness, or even downiness. What is

to us men a soft fur on the stem of a plant will often prove to an ant an impassable jungle like a tropical thicket. and what looks to our sight a woolly caterpillar, may seem to a bird a harsh spine-covered creature. Sometimes, however, the spines on insects are spines even to our human eyes: as is the case with the well-defended prickly beetle illustrated in No. 15, where the creature is seen appropriately walking about on the leaf of a favourite thistle, just as the hedgehogs skulk among gorse or blackthorn, and as the prickly lizards dwell habitually in regions of prickly shrubs, prickly weeds, and prickly bushes. Many other beetles have spiny horns or projections which serve them in good stead as protective devices: a well-known case is that of our large and handsome English stag-beetle. Most of these armed creatures are as little likely to be molested by importunate enemies in their own small world

as the hedgehog, the porcupine, and the sword-fish are likely to be molested in larger circles. Of course it is impossible here to do more than quote a few examples out of the thousands that exist: but there are wide regions of the world where almost every plant and a vast number of the animals are thus covered with sharp thorns, or spines, or bristles. This is especially true of the Mediterranean region, as everyone knows who has wandered on the dry hills behind Nice and Cannes, or botanized the prickly bushes in the North African mountains, or hunted insects among the dry and thorny acacia scrub of Syria and Egypt.

No. 16 introduces us to one of the many caterpillars which are protected by such spines or bristles as seem to us

men scarcely more than hairs. It is the well-known larva of the tortoiseshell butterfly. At first sight, you would hardly suppose that these hairs could be classed among the spikes and prickles we have hitherto been considering. But just imagine yourself a bird, and try to think of yourself as swallowing one of these hairy insects. It must be pretty much the same thing as if you or I were to try swallowing a clothes-brush. As a matter of fact, indeed, protected caterpillars like these are



15.—A PRICKLY BEETLE.

seldom or never eaten by any of the small birds which frequent our hedge-rows; though they have other enemies which manage to tackle them somehow. The cuckoo, for example, is an insatiable caterpillar-eater, and, strange to say, he delights, most of all, in the hairy forms. He seems to have a throat specially constructed for bolting them, while the hair or bristles form at last a perfect coat of felt in the bird's stomach. That is characteristic of the check and counter-check of nature: every move on one side is met and defeated by an opposite move on the other. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that most hairy caterpillars are amply protected from the majority of their enemies, for they show themselves openly, like hedgehogs and porcupines, and do not attempt concealment like the edible sorts; though when attacked, they often roll themselves up into a ball, after the fashion of so many other animals in this protected group, and turn a uniform set of stiff bristles towards the attacking party.

It cannot be by accident, I think, that the globular form is assumed in such different cases both by thorny plants and by prickly animals. The various creatures must have learnt by ancestral experience that this spherical arrangement of the spines or hairs is the best mode for defence: and while some of them, like the melon cactus and the sea-urchin, assume it permanently, others, like the hedgehog, the globe-fish, and the woolly-bear caterpillar, assume it only when special danger threatens. It is curious to note that something similar happens with armadillos

and woodlice, as well as with many marine animals of the armour-plated kind. Analogies like this run all through nature: they recur again and again in the most unlike classes. What succeeds in one place will succeed in another, where conditions are similar: whatever device is hit upon by one plant or animal is almost certain to be independently hit upon in like circumstances

by some other elsewhere. We are all of us a great deal less original than we suppose: and as for us men, it almost invariably happens that our latest invention has been anticipated ages ago by a grub or a sea-anemone. When we prepare to receive cavalry on a thick wall of bayonets at different angles, what are we doing after all save imitating a device long since inaugurated by the hedgehog, the cactus, and the hairy caterpillars? Our hollow square is but an echo of the sea-urchin's



16.—A PRICKLY CATERPILLAR.

shell; our armoured ships, with their destructive rams, are strikingly like the lobster with his pointed forehead. If you look abroad in nature for such hints and anticipations of human progress, you will find them on all sides—especially as regards the arts and stratagems of war. It is only in the highest industries of peace and the fine arts of beauty that we have really got so very much ahead of our dumb relations. For desert warfare, in particular, was there ever a finer strategist than the humble melon cactus? Commissariat is always the great problem in the desert; wells are the crux: he has solved that problem and avoided that crux in a way that would seem to deserve a peerage.

IN A TIGHT FIX.



BY VICTOR L. WHITECHURCH.



WE were strolling through the Paris Salon. Tired of passing through endless galleries and gazing at the pictures, we had descended into the great central hall devoted to statuary, where it is permissible to smoke, and had lit our cigarettes. My companion was only a passing acquaintance, a fellow-countryman I had met at the table d'hôte, and who, like myself, was passing a few weeks in the French metropolis. He was a slight, delicate-looking young man of about five-and-twenty, a well-read and charming companion. As we entered the hall, with its long rows of statues, I noticed that he turned a little pale, but put it down to the heat of the day. Presently we stopped to admire a gracefully-modelled figure by one of the most eminent exhibitors. . . . "A very fine piece of sculpture," said my friend.

"Scarcely that," I replied. "It's made out of an appropriate material—plaster of Paris."

"Plaster of Paris!" he replied, with a nervous start; "how terrible!"

"Why, what's the matter?" I asked, with a laugh.

"Ah!" he replied, "I dare say my exclamation seemed strange to you. But plaster of Paris has an awful meaning to my ears, as you would agree if you heard of an adventure from the effects of which I am only just recovering."

"Have you any objection to telling me?"

"Not the slightest. Come and sit down over yonder, and I'll explain myself; then you'll see why I hate the name of plaster of Paris."

So we sat down and he began his story, which I repeat in his own words as far as possible.

Jasper Keen and myself were chums during the year we were together at Oxford, and our friendship continued after he had gone down through the two years I remained. He was my senior—three or four years older than myself; and, as is generally the case in strong friendships, my opposite in many respects. I was a reading man; Keen was more noted for the strength of his arm on the river, and as a desperate "forward" in the footer field. My temper was always one of the mildest; Keen would give vent to paroxysms of anger, and weeks of smothered, revengeful passion. He was a tall, magnificently-built fellow, and the men often called us the "long and short of it," so great was the contrast between us.

I do not say that there was nothing intellectual about Jasper Keen. On the contrary, he was a genius; only, like most of his species, he worked by fits and starts. When he did work, however, it was to some purpose, as the examiners knew. And with all his great strength and passion for sport he had a very marked artistic temperament,

which showed itself in his love of sculpture and modelling. His rooms were a curiosity. Very few books—he always sold them the instant he had finished reading them—prize oars and “pots” in profusion, and a collection of clay busts, modelled by himself. There was a row of college Dons on his mantelshelf, clever caricatures, his intimate friends—and his enemies. If he liked a man, he made an excellent little bust of him; on the contrary, one who incurred his hatred was modelled in some eccentric or repulsive manner, but still with strict regard to a correct likeness so that it was impossible to mistake the man.

When Jasper Keen left the Varsity he set up a studio in London. He was a man of fairly large private means, and did not care about earning money. He devoted himself still to sport during the intervals when he was not exercising his hobby, and lived a generally easy and comfortable life.

In due time I also went to live in town, and plunged into the vortex of literary work, to which I had determined to devote my life. I constantly saw Keen, and our friendship was as great as ever, until—

Yes, “until”—you guess what I mean. There was a woman in it, as there always is, and she stepped in between us. Jasper Keen loved her madly, jealously. Over and over again he was repulsed, for Ivey Stirling never cared for him. He frightened her with the intensity of his devotion. One day he said to her:—

“The truth is, you care for another man.”

“And what if I do?” said Ivey, boldly.

“What if you do! Why, this. If I find the man, even if he were my greatest friend, I’d kill him rather than he should win you!”

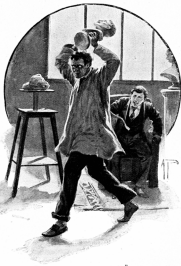
He was Keen’s greatest friend. The man who was accepted by Ivey Stirling was myself, and, in spite of all, I trust she will be my wife before the year is out.

I may well say, “In spite of all.” When Keen heard of it, he was furious. I told him myself. I thought it best that he should hear the news first from the lips of his friend, and I hoped from the bottom of my heart that our friendship would not be destroyed. So I went round to his studio and broke the news to him.

He stood for some moments with his whole frame quivering, his nostrils dilated, and his eyes starting forward, like some wild beast held in restraint by a chain. Then he turned to a pedestal on which stood a bust of myself, fashioned by him in the old Oxford days, and dashed it to the ground. The fragments of clay went rattling over the studio.

“Leonard Fendron,” he yelled, “as I have broken your bust, so will I break you. You false, traitorous hound, you think you have stolen from me the one object I have to live for. But not yet—do you hear? I could crush you as you stand—I could break every bone in your body with this hand of mine. But that would be too poor a revenge. I will wait—I will make you suffer such agony as you have given me. Go, I say, go, and may the worst of all curses light upon you—the curse of a friend you have wronged.”

It was useless to explain, so I went. Ivey was much disturbed when I told her about this interview; but to tell the truth, I thought little of it myself. I had seen Keen in a paroxysm of rage before, and I hoped that



“HE DASHED IT TO THE GROUND.”

in time he would see things sensibly for the sake of our old friendship.

For a year I never saw the man. His studio was shut up, and report said that he had gone abroad. Then I suddenly met him face to face in Fleet Street. I was going to pass him by at first, but he stopped me and shook hands.

"How d'y'e do, Fendron?" he said. "Last time I saw you I was in a bit of a temper. But that's all over now, and I can afford to let the past be buried in the past—if you can too."

"Certainly," I replied; "I'm only too delighted to hear our friendship still exists."

"That's right," he said. "And now come and have some lunch with me. There's a restaurant handy where we can talk."

So I went with him. He was most friendly and chatty. He told me he had been abroad, but that the last five months he had spent in England.

"I've been living like a hermit," he said. "The fact is, I'm engaged on a master-piece of work. It will beat anything I've ever done. Oh, it's a grand thing, I can tell you. I fitted up a studio in the country some months ago, and I've hardly stirred out of it since—simply worked and seen no one. But I've had an end in view, as you shall see for yourself. Now, I want you to pay me a visit, and you shall be the first to see my masterpiece. Will you come?"

"Certainly," I said; "what day will suit you?"

"Let me see—it's the 9th to-day. I want a clear fortnight on the work before I finish. Can you come on Friday, the 24th, and stay till Monday? I can easily put you up."

"With pleasure. That will suit me capitally. Only, you haven't told me where to come to yet."

"I hardly think you'd find it if I did," he answered, thoughtfully; "it's not very far from town, but it's a bit awkward to get at for a stranger. So suppose you meet me at Euston at half-past eight on that Friday evening, and I'll take you down. It's rather late, but you shall have a good supper as soon as you get there, I promise you."

To this arrangement I accordingly agreed, and on the 24th I met Keen at Euston. Telling me that he had purchased my ticket, he took me to a local train. We got out at Sudbury, the station near Wembley Park.

"There's some little distance to walk," he said, "so we'd better step it out briskly."

It must have been a tramp of over two

miles that finally brought us to a large house, standing quite alone a little way off the road, somewhere in the direction of Edgware. Although not many miles from London, the country about here is very lonely, and there was not a house near. It was about ten o'clock and quite dark when Keen opened the door with a latch-key.

"Welcome!" he cried. "You must be tired and hungry. We'll have supper at once, it's all ready."

And without further ado he led the way into a good-sized room, lit by a lamp, and revealed a table spread with cold viands.

There was a change in his tone of voice that made me feel rather uneasy as he went on:—

"We're all to ourselves, Fendron. I've let the servants out for the evening. But everything's ready for us, so sit down and begin. We must be our own butlers."

It was an excitable meal. The whole of the time Keen talked and laughed and joked. He ran on about old times and our college days; he laughed long and boisterously—once I expostulated with him for his noise.

"What does it matter?" he shouted. "There's not a soul near. That's the beauty of the country. You might yell yourself hoarse in this shanty of mine, and no one would hear you."

He even touched on my engagement. Leaning across the table, he insisted upon grasping my hand.

"I've never congratulated you yet, old chap, you know. Last time we were on this subject I was in a huff. But it's all right now. May you be happy—ha! ha! ha!—as happy as you deserve!"

Supper over, he took up the lamp.

"Come," he said, "we'll adjourn to the studio and smoke there. I've got to show you my great work. It will surprise you. Come along."

He led the way to the very top of the house, and we entered a large room which he had turned into a studio. Lumps of clay, pieces of stone, tools, and half-finished works were lying about in artistic confusion. On a small table was a box of cigars, several decanters of wine and spirits, siphons and tumblers. In one corner of the room was a large bath, filled with a white powder, while a small shovel and a couple of pails of water stood by it. In the centre of the room was a very large, hollow wooden pedestal, shaped like a cylinder, and quite as high as my shoulders, such as is used sometimes for standing heavy busts upon. The top, how-

ever, had been removed from this cylinder, and there was nothing on it. The room was evidently only lighted by a skylight, and a thick curtain hung over the door, and stretched across what was apparently a recess at the farther end of the apartment was another curtain, hanging in black folds.

Keen gave me a cigar and sat me down in a chair.

"Well, what do you think of my workshop?" he asked.

"I've hardly had time to look round, yet," I replied. "What's that huge pedestal for?"

"You'll see later on," he said.

Again that ominous change in his voice.

"And what's in that bath?"

"Oh! plaster of Paris," he answered, with a laugh; "but now, watch! I'm going to draw the curtain!"

First lighting a couple more lamps, he drew the curtain aside with a sudden jerk. The result was electrical. There, standing on a small raised platform, life-size and most exquisitely modelled, was a statue of Ivey Stirling, my betrothed. I sprang to my feet and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"Yes," shouted Keen, "there stands the image of the woman you love—and the woman I loved once. She whose image was so graven upon my heart that I was able to mould this statue as you see it; to mould it for you, Leonard Fendron, who have won the prize. Did I not tell you it was a master-piece?"

"You did. And so it is," I replied, with an indescribable feeling of terror creeping over me. My companion rushed to the table and filled two glasses. One of them he thrust into my hand.

"A health!" he cried. "Drain it to

the dregs. A health to the fair Ivey, your betrothed! Drink it, Fendron!"

"A health to the fair Ivey—my future wife," I said, mechanically, drinking the liquor and gazing at the statue.

"Your future wife!" echoed Keen, with a terrible voice. "Never!" I turned and gazed at him. He was foaming with madness and rage. At the same moment my head grew dizzy, and the room seemed twirling round. I made a wild rush for the door, but fell in a dead faint before I could reach it.

When I came to my senses again there

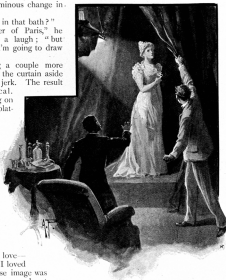
was an awful feeling of cramp all over me. My whole body with my legs and arms seemed to be held in a vice that was pressing upon me at every point. I opened my eyes. The first thing that met my gaze was the statue of Ivey placed opposite me. I was in an upright position, but I could not move. I looked downwards, but not even then did I realize the horrible truth. I was up to my shoulders in the hollow pedestal.

"Halloa!

you've come to, have you?" said a mocking voice, and Jasper Keen stood in front of me, the grin of a lunatic on his face.

"For God's sake, what have you done?" I asked.

"I'll very soon tell you," he replied, with a sneer; "I've made a statue of you. Listen. You are up to your shoulders in plaster of



"I SPRANG TO MY FEET AND UTTERED AN EXCLAMATION OF SURPRISE."

Paris. Whilst you were insensible from the effects of that drugged wine you drank I placed you in the pedestal, mixed that bathful of plaster and water, and poured it in with you. It took me some time to do, and it's now four o'clock in the morning. By this time it's thoroughly set, and you cannot move hand or foot."

The terrible situation was dawning upon my mind. My tormentor went on:—

"Did you think, Leonard Fendron, that I had forgotten? Did you expect to get a forgiveness from Jasper Keen? You should have known me better, and not have walked so foolishly into the snare that I set for you. I told you I would have revenge. I have waited and schemed a long time, but now the hour of my vengeance has come. Here, before the image of the woman you love, you shall die, Leonard Fendron—die a slow and an awful death. I shall leave you here, fixed, immovable—a living statue. Don't think to escape, for I have planned it well. My servants were dismissed two days ago; I told them I was going to leave the house for some months. You can shriek and howl as much as you please, but no one will hear you. I've tested that carefully. In short, unless an angel from Heaven comes to set you free, here you'll stay till you starve to death in cramp and agony."

"Have mercy——" I began, but he stopped me.

"Mercy? As soon expect to find it at Satan's hands! Here, I'll put this table with the liquor on it close to you. It will be more tantalizing. And now I must be off.

I've planned my escape well. Good-bye, Leonard Fendron. I wish you joy with your bride of clay!"

And the madman, for so he was, I am assured, at that moment struck me a heavy blow in the face, turned on his heel, slammed the door, and I heard his footsteps disappear down the stairs. I was alone and helpless.

I cannot describe the torture as the long hours went by and the light of the lamps slowly faded as the day began to dawn. The cramp in my body and limbs was awful, my throat was parched, and my brain seemed on

fire. I yelled and screamed at the top of my voice, listening in anguish for an answering call, but answers came

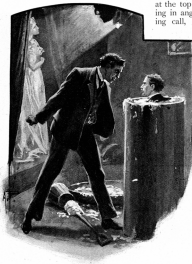
there none. The villain had prepared his plot too well! In my madness I tried to lurch forward and hurl myself to the floor. In vain! The pedestal was fixed! And there, a few feet in front of me, stood the statue of Ivey, so life-like and beautiful that it seemed at times to my frenzied brain that she was smiling and speaking to me.

Then came a time when all was dark. I had fainted. Too soon I returned to the fearful reality,

and redoubled my screams. It was fruitless. I was in a mental and bodily agony that was too awful for words. How the hours passed I knew not. It seemed years that I had been fixed there. I seemed never to have lived at all, except in a world of terror.

My God! I cannot describe the anguish. . . .

Suddenly there came a sound. . . . Yes. . . . I was not mistaken. . . . A heavy bang on the roof over-head. I listened with straining ears—ah—a footstep!



"YOU SHALL DIE A SLOW AND AWFUL DEATH."

"For God's sake, help—help!" I cried.

Then there came a tap at the skylight over-head, and a voice spoke:—

"Excuse me, but may I come in?"

"Come in!" I shrieked; "in Heaven's name yes, come in!"

"You seem in a mighty hurry," replied the voice. "Suppose you open the skylight for me."

"I can't," I answered; "smash it—do what you like—only be quick."

Crash! the glass came spattering down on the floor, a foot came through the window, then another, and in a few seconds the man himself stood before me.

"Well, I'm blowed!" he exclaimed; "what on earth does this mean?"

"For God's sake be quick and set me free," I begged. "It's killing me. Give me something to drink first."

I eagerly drained the tumbler of soda-water he held to my lips. Then he set to work. He was a businesslike man, and there were some stone-chisels and hammers about. In a very few minutes he had split the pedestal down, and was hammering and chipping away at the plaster, which, of course, by this time was quite hard, and came off in flakes and lumps. It seemed ages to me, but he afterwards told me it took him a very short time to get me free, though large lumps of plaster still stuck to my clothes. I was horribly cramped, and could not stir when it was over. He undressed me and gave me a tremendous rubbing, until at length the circulation became partially restored and the agony began to subside, and I was able to talk.

"Well," he exclaimed, "this is the rummiest thing I've ever come across. Good-

ness only knows what would have happened to you if my parachute hadn't gone wrong."

"Your parachute?"

"Yes—that's how I came here. I'm a professional aeronaut, and I've been making a balloon ascent and a parachute descent at Wembley Park every Saturday afternoon for a couple of months past."

"And you landed on the roof?" I exclaimed.

"Exactly. Something went wrong, and I found myself coming down more quickly than I intended. The wind's a bit high and

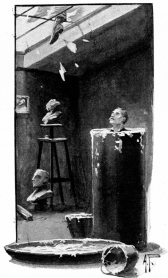
blew me some distance, and I thought I was going smash against this house, but, as luck had it, I just managed to tumble on the roof, which, luckily, is flat, and here I am. Lucky for you, wasn't it?"

Keen's words had come very nearly true. He had said that only an angel from Heaven could rescue me!

Well, little remains to be told. I was very ill for weeks; in fact, I am only just getting over it now. The only wonder is that I escaped as I did, but as Keen had put me in the pedestal with my clothes on, and had not pressed down the plaster, the pressure was slighter than it might have been, though that was bad enough.

As for Keen himself, he got clean away. You see, he had over twelve hours' start, for it was not until late on Saturday afternoon that the aeronaut found me. I don't know, and I don't much care, what has become of him. I only mean to take good care that he doesn't have another chance of stopping our marriage.

And now, perhaps, you will understand why I feel a little queer at the mention of plaster of Paris.



"A FOOT CAME THROUGH THE WINDOW."

Switzerland from a Balloon.

By CHARLES HERBERT.

CROSSING the Alps by Balloon" does not appeal so strongly to the imagination of the reader as trips to the North Pole or Klondike, and yet a great deal of interest and romance attaches to such a project.

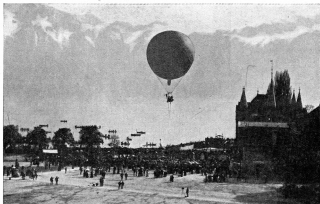
During the late autumn of last year Captain Edward Spelterini, who has made over 500 balloon ascents, determined to make an attempt to cross the high Alps of Switzerland in a balloon, a feat which no air-ship had ever before then accomplished. He had many reasons for wishing to undertake this voyage in the upper regions over the most magnificent scenery in Europe. Himself keenly interested in meteorological and physical questions, he had succeeded in enlisting the sympathy of the Weather Bureau of Switzerland, and also of many Swiss scientific men of high standing. It was his intention to make a number of experiments and observations on the physical conditions of the upper atmosphere, and to take a large series of photographs of the country over which he would travel. The point of view from which these photographs should be taken in order to be of the greatest use for cartography, geography, and geology, was carefully planned,

and attempts were to be made to employ the science of photography in the study of the formation of vapour and clouds in high Alpine altitudes.

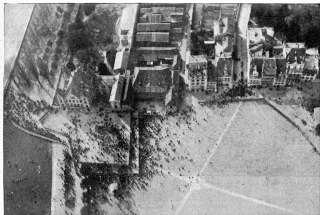
It was on October 3rd that Captain Spelterini, after waiting some days, made his ascent from Sion, in Canton Valais. The "Vega" passed over Montreux and Yverdon; then, crossing the Jura, it went towards Pontarlier at a height of 2,500 mètres. It eventually descended without mishap at Pratoy, between Langres and Dijon, in the Côte d'Or.

The photographs of mountain scenery taken during this balloon trip over the Alps are of extraordinary interest and beauty, and are the only ones of the kind in existence, for no one else has ever photographed the mountains of Switzerland from a balloon before. They give us aspects of the rugged Alps such as no photographer or painter could obtain in the ordinary way. The cloud and snow effects are of great beauty, and the mountains, which we thought we knew so well, reveal themselves in a wonderfully novel and beautiful manner.

Captain Spelterini's photographs open up, in fine, a new field for the lover of Nature, and many disciples of this art will probably arise. There is a great deal of work to be



1.—THE ASCENT AT YVERDON.



A.—THE MARKET-PLACE, VEVEY—FROM THE BALLOON.

done in the way of balloon photography, but the process is not by any means so easy as it looks, and one must be prepared for repeated failures.

Captain Spelterini has written an account of the voyage of the "Vega" over the Alps,

and this, together with the photographs taken on the occasion, will appear in an early number of *THE STRAND MAGAZINE*.

The trip has everywhere aroused the greatest interest, and the German Emperor, doubtless with an eye to the employment of



B.—CLARENS, ON LAKE GENÈVE.



4.—DESCENT IN THE VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

balloon photography in warfare, commanded Captain Spelterini to take his balloon and photographic apparatus to Wiesbaden, and to make an ascent before him there.

The photographs Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 were taken by Captain Spelterini during a special ascent which he made from Vevey, on the Lake of Geneva.

In No. 1 the balloon is leaving Vevey on a lovely summer morning, and a large concourse of spectators have assembled in the Place du Marché to witness its departure, for Captain Spelterini has a great name as an aeronaut, and has made more trips in Switzerland than anyone else. One of the occupants of the car is waving adieu, and his position looks extremely precarious. In the foreground is a photographer with his camera set up on its legs waiting for a favourable moment to "press the button."

No. 2 is a photograph taken from the balloon, which has now risen to some little height

above Vevey. We are looking down on the Place du Marché, where the spectators look like little ants and the buildings like children's toys. How bright the sun must have been is evident from the shadow cast by each individual and every object. The boats on the lake remind one of nothing so much as the little water skaters which

skim to and fro over the surface of a pond.

No. 3 was taken while the balloon was over Clarens, on the Lake of Geneva, the beautiful village three and a half miles from Vevey, immortalized by Rousseau. The villas and chateaux standing in their own grounds present a curious appearance.

The last picture (No. 4) taken during the Vevey ascent shows the balloon at the finish of the journey in the Valley of the Rhone. Captain Spelterini may be seen standing on



5.—RIVER.



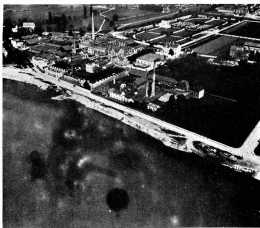
6.—BASEL—THE JOHANNITER BRIDGE.

the right of the balloon. He wears a peaked cap, and his features are illuminated by a broad smile; so he had evidently effected a safe and satisfactory landing.

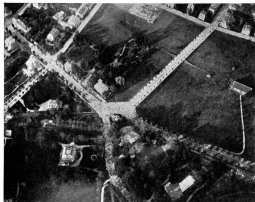
Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 were all taken at one time or another by Captain Spelterini while ballooning over *Bâle*, that great Swiss centre, the "Clapham Junction" of Switzerland, so well known to travellers on the Continent. No. 5 is a very pretty picture, and gives a bird's-eye view of the town and the three bridges. In the foreground is the five-arched "*Johanniter Brücke*," completed in 1882; the centre one is the wooden "*Alte Brücke*," 165yds. in length, 16yds. in breadth, and partly supported by stone piers; it was originally built in 1225. In

very prettily; this photograph was taken in brilliant sunshine, and is a very clever example of balloon photography. No. 7 is curious, for the photographer has managed to get a picture showing the shadow of the balloon on the Rhine. The view was

the middle of the bridge rises a chapel of the sixteenth century, and a column with a barometer and weathercock. Above this old bridge the river is crossed by the iron "*Wettstein Brücke*," completed in 1879 with three spans 200ft. in width. In No. 6 we are looking right down on to the *Johanniter Bridge*, and on the people walking over it, who look like tiny insects. The swirl of the Rhine around the arches comes out



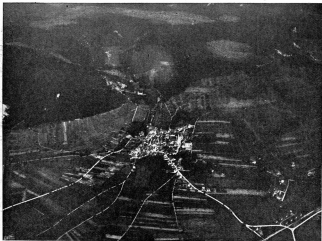
7.—BASEL—SHADOW OF THE BALLOON ON THE RHINE.



8.—NEAR BÂLE—OVER THE MONUMENT OF ST. JACOB.

taken while over the outskirts of Bâle. No. 8 was taken while the balloon was above the monument of St. Jacob to the south-east of Bâle. This monument, completed in 1872, commemorates the heroism and death

of 1,300 confederates who opposed the Armagnac invaders under the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XI.) in 1444. No. 9 was taken while the balloon was over Arlesheim, a little hamlet near Bâle: the white roads spreading out in all directions from the village are plainly visible. No. 10 is Winterthur, on the Eulach, a wealthy and industrial town and an important railway junction. From this photograph we get an idea of the breadth of the principal streets. Winterthur lies to the north-east of Zurich. No. 11 was taken by Captain Spelterini while above St. Gall, one of the highest lying of the larger towns of Europe: it is situated a few miles south of Lake



9.—ARLESHEIM.



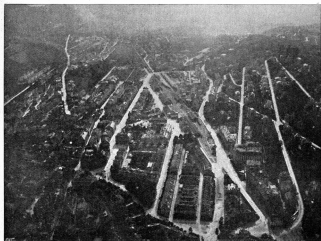
10.—WINTERTHUR.

Coenstance. St. Gall is one of the chief industrial towns of Switzerland, embroidered cotton goods being its staple product. The broad roads in this photograph look almost

No. 14 we get a view of the lake, whose beauty and charm are scarcely equalled by that of any other Swiss lake.

We have already alluded to the fact that

like rivers, and we might imagine we were looking down on a Venice. No. 12 shows the ancient and thriving town of Bienne, on the Lake of Bienne, some thirty miles south of Bâle. The view from Bienne is enhanced in clear weather by the magnificent chain of the Bernese Alps. Nos. 13 and 14 represent Zurich, the beautiful Swiss town which will be well known to most readers. In



11.—ST. GALL.

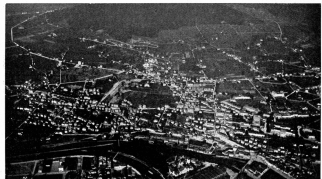


12.—EINSEIDELN.

Captain Spelterini takes a keen interest in scientific matters. During his balloon ascents he frequently makes observations with the meteorological and physical instruments which he carries with him, and the results of his investigations in the upper regions of the atmosphere are greatly valued by the Swiss Weather Bureau and the *servants* of Switzerland and Germany.

"Air travels," writes Captain Spelterini, "have excited at all times the greatest interest

among all classes of the population, and do so even to-day, when a balloon trip is no more considered a rare event. The landing of a balloon, whether it takes place in the neighbourhood of a large town or in the open country, is always an interesting occurrence. Young and old come rushing from all sides, and are ready to lend a helping hand in assisting the aeronaut to pack up his balloon. Every day many people express the wish to be able to travel through the



13.—ZÜRICH.



56.—ZURICH—SHOWING THE LAKE.

air in a balloon and to obtain a bird's-eye view of the earth; few, however, are able to realize this wish. By photographs, however, it is possible to give an idea to anyone outside who cannot enjoy this sport how the earth looks from a bird's-eye view. It is true that such photographs are comparatively rare and difficult to obtain. The attempt of a well-known Berlin artistic establishment to obtain such photographs of large towns, etc., from balloons for their periodical failed from the beginning.

"The difficulties in taking such photographs are very great; a great deal of practice is required, and many failures will occur before something good is produced. I may mention that the reproduction of such photographs by blocks is defective, and cannot be compared with the picture observed on the negative plate through the lens.

"The endeavour to obtain photographs from balloons is as old as photography itself. It is only recently, however, that pictures of any value have been obtained; it was especially the invention of the dry plates and the improvements in connection therewith which contributed in developing balloon photography.

"In most cases it is only possible to take instantaneous photographs, as even a captive balloon is nearly always in motion. Although

the instantaneous shutter may act with the greatest possible speed, it is important also in instantaneous photography that the apparatus should be as nearly as possible in a state of repose at the moment that the photograph is being taken, namely, during the time of exposure. In consequence the camera is either let into the bottom of the car, or, if one wishes to economize space in the car, fixed to the outside of the latter by means of strong universal joints, which make it possible to focus the camera in all directions. The use of a hand camera is of great advantage to an experienced aeronaut-photographer, as it can be easily moved. The steadier the observer holds the apparatus the better of course the photographs will come out. As regards the camera itself, a firm connection of the board holding the lens with the back part is best. Cameras with bellows in the balloon are too easily damaged. As regards shutters, the Anschütz shutters offer the greatest advantages. With these not only can the time of exposure be best regulated, but they have also this in their favour, that the single portions of the sensitive film of the plate are lighted successively, whereby the shaking of the balloon cannot exercise such a disturbing influence upon the clearness of the photo."

Laura

Basil Marran



L



T was settling-day on the Melbourne Stock Exchange, in the second week in January, 1894, and at midday old

Joe Kinnoms walked with uneven, rapid strides through his outer office and banged to the door of his private room as he entered. Next moment his voice was heard, high and rasping.

"Tims!" he called.

In response, his shorthand clerk, a cadaverous, pale-cheeked youth, approached the door timidly. He returned in a few minutes looking even more bilious than usual.

"The guv'nor's got it 'ot! My word!" he ejaculated, as he propped himself against the desk. "I guess the slump in 'The Lone Star' has 'it 'im a faicer. He ain't in to anyone, he sez."

The clerks gaped at each other mournfully. Old Joe Kinnoms, with his burly, huge figure, his laughing, red face, staring eyes, and limping leg, had been a friend to all of them.

His luck, till within the last six months, had been a byword of derision throughout Melbourne. Then, suddenly, the tide had turned. His prospecting partner, Alec Johnson, had stumbled on "The Lone Star" reef on the road to Coolgardie, had pegged out the whole claim, and in less than a

month Joe Kinnoms had been fêted a hundred times, had opened a large office in Collins Street, and was in the full tide of that fortune which had so long lured and baulked him. With the statutory dummies to form a company, he and Johnson were sole proprietors of "The Lone Star," and the shares went booming ever up. The Exchange experts had reported on it in glowing terms, and there was hardly a man in Collins Street who did not clap Kinnoms on his back, swear they had ever thought him a good fellow, and craved the pleasure of drinking his health in a bumper—at Joe's expense.

On the strength of "The Lone Star," Joe had plunged. His liabilities were heavy, but they didn't total half the assets of his treasure-trove. Then on the New Year's Day his telegrams to his partner remained unanswered; a whisper got abroad that the reef had suddenly panned out. The rumour was confirmed, and from twenty-seven pounds a ten-pound share "The Lone Star" slumped

to threepence with no buyers, and "old Joe's luck" again became a proverb.

He sat in his sanctum staring blindly at his private ledger. The figures spelt ruin—inevitable, overwhelming. As he thought of his long life-struggle, his late glorious hopes, his one daughter, Laura, a great groan burst from him. As if in sudden mockery of his thoughts the voice of his daughter rose in the outer office.

"Daddy not in to me, Mr. Tims?" she was exclaiming. "I'll watch it! I'll see my daddy when I like, if the governor and his wife were with him!"

Next moment the private door was flung open and the girl rushed in. Just over the threshold she stopped short, her face blanching suddenly at the sight of her father.

About eighteen years of age, erect and springy as an ash sapling, she was a picture warm and lovely enough to light the eyes of the most fastidious of parents. Her face was startling almost in its brilliant fairness, its rose-leaf, crystal complexion, a fairness only enhanced by the scarlet curve of the full lips, the melting, sunny blue of her eyes, and the golden shimmering of the locks that nestled beneath the sailor-hat. She was dressed in a navy blue yachting costume, which suited her admirably, at once setting off in its contrast her blonde loveliness and suggesting the subtle, long curves of the youthful form.

Her pause was only of a second's duration. The next moment she had flung herself into her father's arms, crying, "Daddy, dear old dad, what is the matter?"

Old Joe for the first time in his life repulsed her irritably, looked stupidly round for a moment, then lifting his hands to his head reeled into a chair. The clerks, frightened at the swift purpling of his face, gathered silently at the door.

"Get a doctor, Mr. Tims," said the girl, quietly, as she bent over her father, loosening his collar. "And you boys had better get to your business. Dad won't be too pleased to find you a-gaping there when he does come round."

Then, as her father stirred, she bent over him again, catching his thickly muttered words.

"Too late, Lottie!" he said, using her child-name. "It's the last settling-day. Stick to 'The Lone Star,' girlie. Johnson a rogue, or put away. Reef's there all right. The Lone Star! . . . Lower tunnel . . . Remember!"

He swayed to and fro for a moment, made

a convulsive grasp at his throat, then, with a heavy lurch forwards, slipped through his daughter's arms on to the floor, dead!

It was about six weeks later that the camp at Riniwaloo, some hundred or so miles from Coolgardie, knocking off work at sundown, was gathered about the store canteen of Miles Hardy, watching with a somewhat listless interest the blurred figure of a horseman creeping slowly down the long ridge that led to the camp.

It was as wild a bit of scenery as Australia knows how to afford. Two great rolling, climbing stretches of mountain rising either side of a mournful, still gully, and towering away 3,000ft. up to the northern and southern skies. Far beneath the eternal silence of the gaunt gum trees, rude slabs of rock, cosy nooks of fern. The camp was on the northern side, within half a mile of the now deserted "Lone Star Reef." Having been built there in the first rush, there it stayed, though the miners were all occupied on the fairly rich reef that lay across the gully. About 800 men in all, they included already a banker, a parson, a storekeeping publican, police agents, and the usual riff-raff, scum, and honest workers of a year-old venture.

The sun dipping down in a blaze of shimmering gold over the western purpled road made it difficult to the watchers outside the canteen to get a fair squint at the new-comer. As the golden orb sank lower, however, the long shadows threw the approaching rider into distinct relief, bringing a score of steely eyes into a blind, concentrated gaze of astonishment.

"Blimey, if it ain't a femayle!" stammered Jos Leslie, ex-African trooper, at last, breaking the silence.

The exclamation emptied the canteen in a moment.

Comment ran high, and the elastic vocabulary of the camp was taxed to the uttermost to supply adequate ejaculations.

Save so far as memory was concerned, a woman had hitherto been an unknown quantity in Riniwaloo, and many a rough miner anxiously scanned the approaching form with dubious eye. Whose wife was it? Whose girl? And what the merry flames did she want, anyhow?

The reality took their breath away. For as the girl rode up, she reined in her horse in front of the silent and rather embarrassed crowd and regarded it critically. She did not seem in the least disconcerted, and many a one there, noting with swift, evasive glance

the small gloved hands, the perfectly cut habit, the delicate, wind-bronzed face with its glory of heavenly eyes and golden hair, felt strange tuggings at their hearts and lumpy sensations of home in their throats.

Someone in the crowd muttered, "My eyes! Ain't she a corker!" Then there was a swift rustle and the sound of a thud, and three men dragged an unconscious form into the canteen and stowed it carefully under a bench.

The girl had looked on unmoved till the three men returned; then, with a nod and a smile, that somehow brought a smirk to every face there, she said, pleasantly:—

"That's just what daddy would have done. And now, boys, I've come to stay, and as I

to work it, boys, and I want partners. Down there in Melbourne the boys were very good—the creditors, I mean. They let me keep the £2,000 dad gave me before the crash came—that and all the Lone Star shares. Now, I want three working partners. Five pounds a week, and a third share between them. Those are my terms! Now, who's on?"

She stopped, smiling inquiry on the up-turned faces before her. There was not a man there who believed in "The Lone Star"—not one who wanted to touch the dead man's luck. But there was any amount of reef-like chivalry beneath those rugged, tanned exteriors, and as the girl remained glancing from one to another of them, a rustle of sympathy moved the crowd.

Then Jos Leslie stepped out, somewhat sheepishly for all his six-feet-one. He was a span, clean-shaven, hard-jawed man, with eyes blue and keen as a sword-blade, and no one had ever known him smile either in the mining camp or in the South African troopers, where he had served four years.

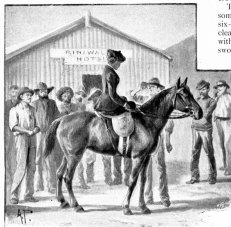
"I'm on, miss! Jos Leslie the boys call me," he said, shortly, "and ye can have my shanty in an hour—till you can suit yourself. I camped with your daddy in New Zealand once afore you was born, and he was a white man, every inch."

"That's all right then!" said the girl, and, slipping from her horse, she walked up to him and took his great hand in her two

little ones and gave him a hearty grip.

Jos's face broke into a smile, so wintry, so fugitive, that it was gone before any but the girl could notice it. Yet its mournful light gave the girl a sense of security and home she had not felt since she looked last on her father's face.

"Then, Jos!" she said again, "you shall be my steward. And as I reckon it's customary in these parts for strangers to pay



"I'VE COME TO STAY."

guess you're all dying to know who I am, I'll just tell you. You all know Joe Kinnoms by name, and how he had 'The Lone Star' there. Well! daddy's dead!"

She paused a moment, and the red mouth quivered bravely, and the blue eyes shone through a mist of tears as she went on:—

"Daddy's dead! and he told me, before the news of the reef panning out killed him, to work 'The Lone Star.' I've come here

their footing, you'll please call for drinks round. Here's my purse."

And in spite of the sudden torrent of expostulations the girl held her own. "No," she called, in her fresh young voice, "I'm one of you now, boys. And if you won't have a drink with me, why Jos'll just have to ask you why."

That settled it, and they baptized the acquaintance in Mike's best. And when Jos Leslie, having installed his senior partner in his shanty, returned to the canteen, he smote the bar with his fist till the dancing glasses secured him attention.

Then his steely eyes roamed round for a while on the silent faces, and his thin, trap-like lips opened, and he remarked, sententiously and in the rhetoric most approved in Riniwaloo:—

"Boys! I'm father to that girl. If any o' you wants to dispute my claim, we'll come right out now. And if any o' you wants to be hangin' round her skirts in the future, you'll do well to remember that Jos Leslie ain't the one to stand any fooling. And now we'll drink to her 'ealth."

II.

LIFE in Riniwaloo for the four months following the arrival of Laura Kinnoms was as new an experience for the miners as for the girl. She did more moral evangelizing in a week than the parson had done in three months. Even the roughest of them, if they sneered behind her back, could not resist to her face the genial cordiality—the unaffected sense of comradeship the girl's demeanour betrayed. The whole camp showed a higher moral level, a sense of self-respect betrayed in the sudden demand for white shirts, soap and razors, and in some cases, in the early days, evidenced by the black eyes and disfigured faces of persistent blasphemers. And as the weeks rolled on, pity lent to rugged chivalry a more tender force. For the "Lone Star" was still barren. Shaft after shaft had been sunk. Every square yard more or less tapped yielded nothing but a promising quartz, whose glistening white and emerald points were as a will-o'-the-wisp luring to madness. Yet the girl never lost hope. In her memory ever rang those strange, blurred words her father had muttered: "Lone Star! Lower tunnel! Remember!" And again, "Johnson a rogue, or put away."

And of Johnson she had never been able to find trace. He had with two others quitted Riniwaloo on New Year's night, and had never since been heard of. The current

opinion of the camp was that he had sold his partner with false information, realized his shares, and cleared out when discovery became inevitable. Likely enough, the girl thought. Yet such a hypothesis did not explain away her father's words, "lower tunnel." It was that lower tunnel she was ever seeking.

Yet the end of four months found her with only £50 left, and still no clue. Her position was verging on the desperate. Between ruin and herself only marriage loomed. Yet in her heart her father's fibre was knitted—a spirit unbreakable, rising ever from disaster to new effort, spurning help—the stern, reckless spirit of the true colonist!

Only Jos Leslie remained her partner now. The other two, despairing, had at the end of two months sought further fields. In old Jos, however, was a strong thread of superstitious belief. To him it seemed that "Joe Kinnom's luck" was bound to turn at his death, and the indomitable confidence of his fair partner inspired him with a boundless belief.

He would have been almost scandalized had he been able to read the girl's mind as she wandered one evening in early July from her shanty up towards the bluff where the camp hung over the gully. For Laura was beginning to despair, and the day's events had accentuated her mood. In all the little community there was but one man who had been able to disturb her calm purpose. The bank manager, Jack Harrison, had from the first fallen in love with the girl's lovely face, bright ways, and plucky, undaunted character. He was a son of a Melbourne lawyer, dark, with a rather stern, dominating face, a fierce, black moustache, but eyes whose black depths grew strangely glowing and tender as his gaze rested on Laura Kinnoms. He had proposed to her with firm regularity once a month since her arrival. And on this particular evening he had gone so far as to plead her own position with her. But the girl, in spite of the insistent clamour at her heart, had been adamant.

"Till 'The Lone Star,' she said, "pays a 10 per cent. dividend, I'll marry no man."

"But, Laura," he had argued, taking the little hands in his, and gathering comfort from the restful, clinging way they lay there, "with me you will only take another partner, and a bit more capital."

"That's just it, dear!" she had replied. "If it wasn't for the little bit more capital I'd take the partner at once."

And Jack Harrison, for all his persuasive

eloquence, had to rest content with the answer, with its half promise concealed beneath the frankly blushing face and wholly fearless smile.

Yet Laura herself was far from content. The spirit of blue devils had seized her; her footsteps wandered all unconsciously up the cliff goat-track she had descended with the bank manager that day. As the bank came in sight she recollected herself, and with a vivid blush dropped sitting on to a boulder. It was dark enough in all conscience to hide her blushes, and she need not have been afraid. But there was nevertheless the hammering of three little words at her heart that seemed to her to shout their victorious secret to the four winds: "I love him!" That was the simple refrain—old as the hills—as melodious, as stubborn!

She could not hide it from herself. The fact was too exultant, knowing his love. Yet she had tried with all her soul to turn from it, knowing in her loyal young heart that, once she yielded herself to her lover, her father's last trust would soon be surrendered to his business sense of possible gains.

The scene was desolate enough. In front of her right across the great brooding blackness of the gully swam the dim outline of the Riniwaloo Reef range. At the back away on her left the camp clung, a blotch of blackness with grey tents staring out and flickering stars of oil-lamps. Away up on the ridge, hanging right on to the sky-line, was the bank, house and business premises combined, not soft away. It had been built that way for safety, the back running plumb with the sheer descent of the gully, the front facing the irregular line of shanties that formed the "township."

It had been a

dry "wet season," save for a drenching shower the preceding night, but the sky was clouded, blotting out moon and stars, and lending the wild ruggedness around a degree of mournfulness that intensified the lonely silence.

The girl had been sitting some time, her burning face buried in her hands, her thoughts in a feverish riot not even her straight habit of thinking could disentangle, when through her numbed consciousness there crept the sense of a persistent, recurring sound. At first she paid no heed to it. But little by little the "tap," "tap," "tap," bore in on her, drawing her from introspection to an almost unconscious curiosity.

"Tap!" "Tap!" "Skin—k!"

The sound was unmistakable. Her experience of four months' mining was sufficient to indicate its source. Someone was mining a tunnel under her feet—there below the face of the cliff. The strangeness of the proceeding, intensified by the lateness of the hour, suddenly electrified the girl into a state of vivid interest. The boulder on which she was sitting was not roft away from the edge of the shelving cliff. She crept silently

forward, and, lying flat on her face, leant far over, listening. The sound came now quite distinctly. She could hear the tap of hammers, as of men timbering a tunnel. Now and then a hoarse whisper floated up, and now and then, too, a whirr of shale scudded down the smooth rock some 20ft. in front of her.

Her breath came and went fast. Instinctively, she felt she was on the verge of a great discovery, and her father's words raced madly through her brain—"The lower tunnel." Her quick eyes, accustomed to the gloom, noticed that the cliff beneath her was honeycombed with great cracks and strewn with a wiry brushwood. On



"SEE LET HER BODY
SLIP OVER THE EDGE."

the hot impulse of the moment, she writhed round and let her body slip slowly over the edge, clinging fiercely with her small, strong hands to the wisps of win-grass. She had lowered herself about roft. when she saw a little to her right a kind of cave hollowed out, through which the shale was ever and again thrown. Resting on a ledge she glanced backward to her left. An added blackness in the face of the cliff showed her almost instantly just such another opening.

With infinite care, her eyes blazing, her lips set firm, she hauled herself from tuft to tuft, her eyes and feet seeking wildly the irregular foothold of the broken cliff, till her bent face looked full into a round hole. For a moment she hesitated, fear of the inside holding her breath suspended. But again the memory of those words, "the lower tunnel," came on her. Inside was a faint flicker of light. But the voices were more blurred, the tapping almost muffled. She set her teeth together and squeezed boldly through the hole, finding herself on hands and knees inside a narrow tunnel. The first things her hands became aware of were that she was kneeling between a pair of rails. "Truck rails, my word!" she murmured, under her breath, as she rose softly to her feet and strove to pierce the darkness in the direction of that flickering light in front.

After a little pause, she collected her energies and courage and advanced tip-toe towards the light. Suddenly her foot struck the metals, the light vanished, and her outstretched hands found the damp cliff. She followed the trend of it, her heart in her mouth, and in a moment, with a swift movement, sank huddled to the ground. For as she rounded the curve, she came into full view of three men. A lantern on the ground threw a coppery, dull glow on to their faces, and in the light she saw as in a flash of lightning the face of her father's quondam partner—Johnson. The recognition staggered her, and her breath came in short catches. It was true then, she thought, after all, and Johnson was a rogue. As she shivered huddled up against the wall, the conversation left no room for doubt.

"We'll never get it finished to-night, skipper," said one of the men.

Alec Johnson turned on him savagely, one hand supporting a large plank, which he was driving against the wall by a long wooden peg.

"Who asked your d——d advice, Jacobs?" he said. "It's a case of *must*. The escort comes to-morrow, and all the bullion goes

down in the afternoon. There's £60,000 in the safe to-night. And get it we must."

"If it hadn't been for that delage last night," rejoined the other of the three, "we'd be all safe. But I don't see the use, no more than Jacobs, in all this timbering."

"Don't you?" sneered Johnson, fiercely. "You'd look smart, wouldn't you, if when we had the safe in the trolley the sides caved in? Very jolly spree for us all! My colonial! Do you think," he went on, with rising ire, "that I've planned and watched, worked and lived in a blamed cave for six months for this, to have it spoil in the last moment? When I let old Joe Kinnoms in—not that I ever thought he'd kick the bucket over it—I meant to grab the lot. As you boys know, there's a million of money lying down in the mine below there. Once we've got the bank safe down and blown the tunnel away, who the blazes is to find us? There's sixty thou in that safe, and I guess that's enough to buy out old Joe's chit and run 'The Lone Star' as it ought to be run. So that safe's got to be run to-night. There ain't more than two or three planks between it and the trolley, and by midnight it will be in the lower tunnel. And now you buck to, my boys, or quit."

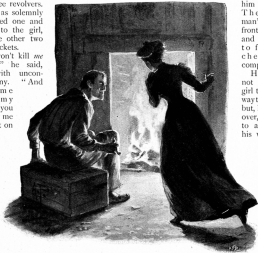
The eyes of the girl lying huddled behind the wet rock would have startled her lover. There was something of the same steel-like glint in them that made Jos Leslie a feared man in camp. Inch by inch she drew herself backward towards the hole by which she had entered. No doubt was in her mind. The fearless spirit of old Joe Kinnoms was on her, and its wealth, too, of resource. Even in the moment of revelation she had formed her plan. No word to the bank manager! She would seek out her partner, Jos! The two of them would trail the gang to the "lower tunnel," would vindicate her father's memory, and hold up the ruffians in the very moment of their success.

As she crawled out of the hole and wriggled up the slope she had no more consciousness of the deadly depths beneath her than a mountain goat. Once on the top she wound her skirts up over her arm and ran, ran like a wallaby, leaping from point to point till she gained Jos Leslie's hut. She gave a gasp of joy to find old Jos, steely-eyed and stolidly inquisitive as to her errand in such haste.

"I've found it, Jos!" she gasped. "The lower tunnel. They're going to hold up the bank, and we are going to hold them up. Don't sit staring there. Put all the revolvers you have in your pocket and come along."

If the girl's eager, flushed face roused Jos's suspicions as to her sanity, a glance into the hard, shining eyes undeceived him. He rose solemnly and loaded three revolvers. Then just as solemnly he unloaded one and handed it to the girl, stuffing the other two into his pockets.

"You won't kill me with that," he said, gravely, with unconscious irony. "And now come along, my pretty, and you shall tell me all about it on the road."



"DON'T SIT STAREING THERE."

III.

It was a good hour's climb from Jos Leslie's shanty to the spot where Laura had escalated the cliff, and by the time they reached the place, a nasty drizzle had set in, and Jos had been told the full account of what had happened. Laura, gazing at him now and then through the darkness, felt her breath catching between a breath and a sob at the rigid outlines of his face and the grey glowing of his eyes. Jos had loved old Joe Kinnoms as mates in a breast-high stream sometimes learn to love a man compounded of cheerful unselfishness and unvarying pluck. He loved the daughter, too—in a different way, as the wild natures of rock and riot and bush life love the glint of a particular star—in silence rendered very dear and holy by a reverence strange to their lives, a reverence incarnating all the unbidden, haunting, smothered impulses of lives cast in alien ways.

Laura's hopes, her fears, her love, and especially her vengeance—were his. Body and soul he knew no other aim, sought no

other reward than her satisfaction. He had the elemental clearness of the savage in his perception of emotions, and the present occasion filled him with joy. There was man's work in front of him, and he meant to fulfil it, cheerfully, completely.

He would not allow the girl to lead the way to the hole, but, leaning far over, swung her to and fro by his wiry arms,

till her feet found footing beneath it. A minute afterwards he had joined her inside the tunnel. The sound of a sudden clang, and a muttered oath, warned them they were only just in time. A few strides brought them to the corner where Laura had sheltered, and, crouching low, they listened to the faint hum and groaning of wheels rapidly approaching.

"Get right behind me, my pretty," said Jos, in a whisper, as the light of a lantern swung to the corner. In each hand he had a revolver, and as the girl crouched behind him she whispered, "Don't shoot! Remember the tunnel."

Jos's head just moved in response. Next moment a trolley, with a lantern swung on front, rolled softly past them, casting a thin, shadowy light down the glistening rails. On the trolley was a huge safe, and sitting on the safe was Mec Johnson, his face flushed and eager, and in his hand the handle of the brake.

"Softly boys," he whispered, turning to

the two men pushing at the back. "Softly does it round the corners. Whoa! Hold her! So!

"Now, Jim," he went on, addressing one of the men, "you go back and fire the mine. Me and Jacobs will take on the trolley and wait for you round the next turn."

The two in the corner, the man and the girl, crouched lower and lower in the shadows. The lamp cast its light away from them, the great safe enveloping all the rearward in black shadow. They could barely distinguish the form of the man "Jim" as he returned slowly, and by the diminishing flicker and sudden disappearance of the light, they knew the trolley had turned the next corner.

"Sit like a mouse, pretty," whispered Jos, as the returning figure approached. Then, before Laura could breathe a word, he had glided away to the corner. Next moment there was a muffled groan, a stumble, and then Jos returned dragging after him the form of a man, one huge hand on his throat, the other on his mouth.

"Quick, miss!" he whispered. "Your hat or scarf, or anything for a gag."

In a moment Laura had unpinned her Tam-o-Shanter, and as Jos removed his hand, before the man could recover his breath she had crammed the soft woollen thing into his mouth. Within two minutes Jos had him tied hand and foot and knees, tight, incapable.

"Take my advice, sonny," the ex-trooper whispered, as he was about to depart. "Lie still, and we'll collect you for Queen's evidence." Then taking Laura by the hand, the two crept cautiously along, following the feel of the rails by their feet.

For a full half-hour the two strode onwards, ever down by a gentle descent. The place was in densest darkness, and they dared not strike a light. Suddenly, however, the tunnel took a swift turn, and next moment Laura and her partner stood in a subdued flood of light.

The scene before them was an extraordinary one. They were in a small natural cave, and their trained eyes could see at a glance that one of its sides was scarred with a dusky red scar, the hall-mark of reef gold.

In the centre of the cave the trolley stood with the safe still untouched, and the lantern flashing its flickering light on the sullen, wealthy walls. By the side of the trolley the two men, Alec Johnson and Jacobs, were wrestling in deadly combat, each with knife in hand, hard gripped and writhing in the other's clasp. The effect was almost instantaneous, for even as Jos and Laura entered, the two struggling men fell with a crash,



"THE TWO MEN WERE WRESTLING IN DEADLY COMBAT."

Johnson uppermost, Jacobs lying helplessly entangled and strangely still between the wheels, where a thin red pool began to grow.

Johnson's knife was held on high, and he snarled savagely.

"Did you think I'd chuck old Joe to share with such a white-livered——" then he paused, his eyes catching the growing pool of red, his sense numbly conscious of the other's clay-like inertness. He shrank back, hastily rising to his feet, and furtively shoving his knife into his belt. Then with a swift, fearful glance he turned round—and looked straight into the barrels of Jos Leslie's revolvers.

"Hands up, Alec Johnson!" said Jos's

crisp, snarling tones. "No palaver! Hands up!"

Johnson obeyed, mechanically, stupidly, his eyes fixed on the strange apparition at Leslie's side. The girl's face, white, rigid, avenging, her great blazing eyes, the thin scarlet thread of her compressed lips, paralyzed him. He found no room for thought, much less resistance. And as in obedience to Jos's bidding her empty revolver covered him, he suffered himself to be bound to the trolley by Jos's trusty knots.

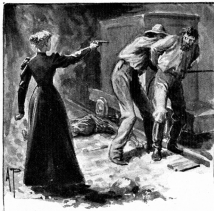
Jos's task was scarcely completed when a

telephoned the police, at once hitting on the plan of the thieves. They had followed the way of the safe, struck the trolley lines, and arrived as has been shown, all unconscious of the deadly peril that, save for Jos's little bit of garroting, had sent them all on another path.

As the agents took off Johnson and the still unconscious Jacobs, Harrison lingered a moment behind with the girl.

"Won't you say 'yes' even now, Laura?" he begged, as his arm stole around her waist.

Laura looked at him, a roguish smile about her lips and demurely veiled eyes.



"HE SUFFERED HIMSELF TO BE BOUND TO THE TROLLEY."

rush of feet was heard, and next moment the cave was flooded with light and men, conspicuous among whom was Jack Harrison's towering figure and excited face.

"You!" he gasped, falling back at the sight of Laura, as the police agents rushed on Leslie and secured him. "You!"

"Yes, Jack!" she answered, simply. "I struck this trail to-night, and Jos and I followed them."

Explanations were speedily exchanged, and as the police agents heard how the girl and man had held up the gang, their first suspicions changed into hearty congratulations. Nor was their content diminished when they heard of the scheme of the mine. For the bank manager, having been by chance in his office at the moment when the safe had disappeared bodily from his view, had promptly

"Do you think," she answered, pointing to the dull glowing of the reef gold, "do you think it will pay a dividend of 10 per cent.?"

Then with a sudden twist releasing herself, she turned to Jos, standing stiffly by.

"What do you think, dear old Jos? Will it pay 10 per cent.?"

"There's never no knowing," he said, gruffly, "how them kind of dividends run. It may be ten, or fifty, or a hundred, and agen it may be nothing—or wuss. But I guess it might be worth trying."

And if as he walked up the tunnel again there was a strange moisture about his eyes, there was a still stranger smile about his lips, in which no cynicism mingled, and it was in Jack Harrison's hand that Laura's rested as they walked down the mountain path to her "shanty."

A Peep into "Punch."

BY J. HOLT SCHOOLING.

[The Proprietors of "Punch" have given special permission to reproduce the accompanying illustrations. This is the first occasion when a periodical has been enabled to present a selection from Mr. Punch's famous pages.]

PART VI.—1870 TO 1874.



THE LAST BUS.—Landlord. "What are yer Gair to 'ave, Gen'lemen?"
Driver (shivering). "Well—Blow'd if I ain't Farnished! I should like—
Is there Time for a 'Rabbit'?" Who 'ave yer got Inside, Bob?"
Conductor (aloud). "Oh, all Respectable, 'Igh-minded, Well-to-do
People! Wouldn't 'ave no Objection, I'm sure!"
[He could be "diagnoseable" after this!]
L.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1870.

WHAT a very clever drawing Charles Keene's picture in No. 1 is! Although in this small facsimile the effect is not so good as in the much larger *Punch*-drawing, it is really wonderful to see, even here, how this picture actually tells us of the exact surroundings of this journey by "the last bus" into a London suburb. The nip of the night air is felt as one looks at this picture, and the cold darkness ahead of the cheery inn is as real as the attitudes



LITTLE ADA. "I wish I'd got Teeth like yours, Aunt Lizzie, it would be so Nice to Take 'em out to Play with!"
L.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1870.

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of the passengers huddling together inside the bus, on the box-seat of which is a half-frozen grumpy man by the side of the driver, who wants a "Welsh rabbit," while a fat-faced and artful conductor conciliates the inside passengers, at any rate, by his emphatic assertion that they are "all Respectable, 'Igh-minded, Well-to-Do People," who "Wouldn't 'ave no Objection, I'm sure," to the delay caused by compliance with the driver's wish to have a "Rabbit."

Look, in No. 2, at the expression on the gentleman's face who is doing a discreet throat-cough on to the top of his hat, as, with eyes cast down, he tries to look uncon-



A DUEL TO THE DEATH.

FROM "THE GREAT DUEL, BATTLE OF THE BLOOD, BUT NOT OF THE OLD FASHIONED QUARTER, AND NO MORE ABOUT IT SET!"

3.—SOUTHERN'S ATTEMPT TO PREVENT THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR. BY SIR JOHN TENNIEL, JULY 27, 1870.

scious of the appalling wish just uttered by the sweet child to her Aunt Lizzie, the gentleman's hostess—Charles Keene again—inimitable, is it not?

Then in Nos. 3 and 4 are two finely-conceived cartoons drawn by Sir John Tenniel, who has never failed to do full justice to a good cartoon-idea, whether the conception come from himself or from the combined forces of the *Punch*-table, at which once a week the forthcoming cartoon is discussed and arranged. These two cartoons touch the Franco-German War of 1870: in No. 3, published July 23, 1870, Britannia tries to prevent the duel between Napoleon III. and the German Emperor William I. (then merely King of Prussia), but the Frenchman puts Britannia back with the words, "Pray stand back, Madam. You mean well, but this is an old family quarrel, and we must fight it out!" Napoleon III. simply forced this war on Prussia, upon a frivolous pretext, and by so doing delivered himself and his country into the hands of his enemy—stiff-backed Bismarck must have smiled a grim smile on the other side of the Rhine when, on July 16, 1870, the deluded French



Emperor declared war against Prussia.

In July, France's shout was "à Berlin! à Berlin!" but so delusory were the French official accounts to Napoleon III. of the might of his battalions, that at once France had to act on the defensive against the sturdy, well-handled Prussians, who tramped, tramped, tramped across into France and drove the Frenchmen back at all points. In less than two months after Tenniel drew No. 3, he was called upon to show in car-



toon No. 4 (published September 10, 1870) the result of the duel between the two men. The date inserted in the corner of No. 4, "2nd September, 1870," refers to the surrender on that day of the Emperor Napoleon with his army of 100,000 men, at Sedan. We see in this cartoon the beaten Frenchman staggering against the

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DESPERATE CASE!—*M. A. endeavouring to twist Euclid into the mind of Private Papist going into the Army.* "Now, if the Three Sides of this Triangle are all Equal, what will happen?" *Papist (confidently).* "Well, Sir, I should say the Fourth would be Equal, too!"

7.—PUBLISHED IN 1871.

tree as he groans out, "I have been deceived about my strength! I have no choice," in reply to the King of Prussia's words, "You have fought gallantly, Sir. May I not hear you say you *have* enough?"

An amusing echo of the then prevalent war-feeling is given by Du Maurier in No. 5. Charles Keene illustrates a good Scots joke in No. 6, and, glancing at No. 7, we see in No. 8 an interesting example of Mr. Linley Sambourne's early style, very different from the Sambourne-drawings of to-day, which have for so long a while



GUNS FEARS TARGETS.

8.—BY LINLEY SAMBOURNE, 1871.

been one of the best-liked features of *Punch*. This early-Sambourne drawing illustrates the rivalry in 1871 (and more recently than then) between the smashing force of big guns and the resistive-power of armour-plates. The gun seen here has just



BETTER FULMER (A HARMLESS THUNDERBOLT).—*Old Gentleman.* "Now you Children, I'll tell you what it is: If you make any more Noise in Front of my House, I'll Speak to that Policeman." *Chorus of Juveniles (couch tickled).* "That Policeman! Lor' we ain't Afraid of 'em! Why, that's Father!"

9.—BY DU MAURIER, 1870.

beaten the armour-plated target, and is receiving with a pleased grin the congratulations of the artillery officer who shakes the "hand" of the victorious big gun.

Pictures 9, 10, and 11 bring us to a very funny



"WHILE BEATING CHANTERS PROUDLY SWELL"—*anon.*

Mr. McSherrigan (giggling the time with some cheerful psalmists on his national instrument.)

10.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1871.

Mr. Southdown (travelling north with his Family by the Night Mail). "Dear, dear, dear! What a Shame they don't Gouge the Wheels of those Carriages! I can't get a Wink of Sleep! (After 5. groans in sympathy.) I declare I'll Complain to the Directors."

joke in No. 12, and after the next two, Nos. 13 and 14, we see a powerful cartoon by Tenniel entitled "Suspense." This No. 15, in which Britannia holds her breath in suspense as she gazes at the closed door of a sick room, relates to

the struggle for life of the Prince of Wales when in December, 1871, he was attacked by typhoid fever. At the date of this cartoon, December 23, 1871, the Prince's life was almost despaired of. But the Prince lived, and on March 2, 1872, Tenniel gave us, in *Punch*, another sequel-cartoon, a great double-



BEHIND THE SCENES (the lachrymose friends of Benedick have just taken their departure).—Benedick (who has married Mary, and still swears under none of the consequences). "O, I say, Mary Ann, I wish to goodness you wouldn't let me in Public. I don't so much mind it—when we're Alone, but before a Lot of Fellows, hang it all, you know?" Mary Ann (who is up in Mr. Anthony's parlour). "And why not, my Phoebe? Should not a Woman Glory in her Love?" Benedick. "O, Bother!"

11.—BY DU MAURIER, 1871.

grin of the beach-minstrel and by his strident "threat"—"O let me Kiss him for his Mother!" No. 17 is rather funny, and in No. 18 the old gentleman is very cleverly drawn, concerning whom startled Tommy asks his mother: "Does that Old Genkleman like, Mamma?"

There is a lot



COMMERCIAL INSTINCT.—Dignified, "Did ye hear that Sweeney McNab was 'n' up for Stealin' a Coo?"

Dignified, "Hoot, toot, the Slight Bodie! Could he no Bocht it an' no Paid for?"

12.—BY W. BALSTON, 1871.



RATHER INCONSIDERATE!—Policeman (suddenly, to Street Performer). "Now, then! Just you Move on, will yer?"

13.—BY DU MAURIER, 1871.

page one of happy omen, showing the "Thanksgiving" at St. Paul's Cathedral on February 27, 1872.

Pictures 16, 17, and 18 are all by George Du Maurier. The little boy in No. 16 rushes to his mother terrified by the frightful



A GENERAL SALUTE.—Captain Dignified, 1st R.F. (with voice). "Now, what the Dooce can these Symptom Gals mean by Looking in that ridiculous Manner?"

14.—BY W. BALSTON, 1871.

of good sense, as well as much fine artistry, in Sir John Tenniel's cartoon No. 19—"The Real Cap of Liberty." The British Lion, holding a crown in one hand, with the other knocks a republican cap from the head of an artisan depicted



SUSPENSE.

15.—WHEN THE PRINCE OF WALES WAS HESITATING BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. BY TENNIEL, DECEMBER 23, 1874.

as a donkey, exclaiming: "What can that *cap* promise, that my *cravat* doesn't perform? Eh, stoopid?" *Punch* is always so sensible: a bit "robust," sometimes, in his plain words, as, for example, when, a few months ago, he boldly gave vent to the feelings of ninety-nine men out of a hundred, and by his literal expression of public feeling had a dissentient gentleman's umbrella struck through the glass of his famous window at 85, Fleet Street.

You will see in No. 19 that the "donkey" holds a paper in his right hand labelled, "Great ***** [H]ole in the Wall." Being not quite clear as to the meaning of this paper, I asked

Sir John Tenniel to explain this point, which only the lapse of years has rendered indistinct. Sir John wrote: "I fancy that the paper in the ass's hand merely indicates a 'great' meeting to be held at 'The Hole



A VALUABLE ACQUAINTANCE.—*Darling Nephew*. "O, Uncle, I thought you wouldn't mind my bringing my friend Grigg from our Office. He ain't worth to look at, and he can't dance, and he don't talk, and he won't play cards—but he's such a mimic!! To-morrow he'll imitate you and Aunt Bessy in a way that'll make all the Fellows roar!!!"

17.—BY DU MAURIER, 1875.

in the Wall,' a low typical public-house, frequented by a particular class of 'republican' agitators."



ZOOLOGICAL.—*Little Tommy Trent* (who has never seen a *Respirator* before). "Does that Old Gentleman find, Mamma?"

18.—BY DU MAURIER, 1875.



A VOICE FROM THE SEA.—"O let me kiss him for his Mother!"

19.—BY DU MAURIER, 1875.

These words by Sir John explain the paper in the ass's hand, and the general *motif* of the cartoon is, of course, a thoroughly sensible statement, based on the silly repub-

lican fads which from time to time crop up, even in this country.

The drawing of this cartoon is very fine.

The bit of social satire in No. 20 is by Du Maurier, and he also drew No. 21, where the little girl, who has for the first time discovered that even a kitten's paws are not always the velvet they seem to be, exclaims, in some dismay "O dear me! Has Tittens dot Pins in their Toes, I vunder!"

The cartoon in No. 22 is very pithy. Mr.



THE REAL CAP OF LIBERTY.

Some say: "WHAT CAN THAT CAP MEAN, THAT MY GROUP'S DIGNITY PERFECT BE, WHORE?"

20.—BY TENNIS, 1871.

pipe "loaded" to the tune of £200,000,000 damages said to have been caused to the interests of the Northern States of America during the war in 1863-65 with the Southern States by our action in letting the warship *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers leave British dockyards and ports to inflict damage upon the shipping, etc., of the Northerners. But Wil-yum-ew-art doesn't see it: he won't take that Peace-pipe: he says, indeed, "That is no Peace-pipe! Thy Cousin cannot smoke that!"



CEREBRO.—"Well, good-bye, dear Mrs. Jones. I hope you will excuse my not having called—the Distance, you know! Perhaps you will kindly take this as a *Plait*!"

"O, certainly! And perhaps you will kindly take this as a *Plait* Returned!"

20.—BY DE MAURIER, 1871.

Punch, Mr. Gladstone, and Cousin Jonathan squat, as North American Indians, round a fire, and they are trying to smoke the Pipe of Peace, and so to arrange the dispute between us and the United States that years ago dragged on over the *Alabama* claims for compensation made upon us by the United States.

But Jo-na-than (*The Downy Bird*) is offering to Wil-yum-ew-art (*The Cheerful Rock*) a Peace-

And then Roo-ti-toit (*Punch* on the right) chips in with the suggestion: "Hath not our Cousin, 'The Downy Bird,' been at the fire-water of the Pale Faces?"

This claim for £200,000,000 was



EXPERIENTIA DICKY.—"O dear me! Has Tittens dot Pins in their Toes, I vunder!"

21.—BY DE MAURIER, 1871.



SHOOKING THE "CAUCHUKT."—Jo-in-thai (*The Downy Bird*).
 "Cousin, my Cousin! Let us smoke the Peace-pipe!"
 "Wd-yun-ee-ee!" (*The Chertsey Rock*). "That is no Peace-pipe!
 Thy Cousin cannot smoke that!"
 "Roo-ti-oo!" (*The Wine Baggage*). "Hath not our Cousin 'The
 Downy Bird' been at the fire-water of the Pale Faces?"
 22.—A REFERENCE TO THE ENDURANT "ALABAMA" CLAIMS;
 BY TENNIEL, 1872.

of course utterly preposterous, and passing the *Punch* pictures Nos. 23, 24, 25, and 26, we see in No. 27 a very pleasing cartoon by



GENTLE PATERNAL SATIRE.—*Irish Parent*. "O! Yer don't want to go into Business, don't yer! O! Yer want to be a Clerk in the Post-Office, do yer! Post-Office, indeed! Why, all yer've fit for is to Stand Outside with your Tongue out, for People to Wet their Stamps against!"
 23.—BY DU MAURIER, 1872.

Tenniel, entitled "The Loving Cup," with the words: *In this we bury all unkindness!*

This cartoon relates to the settlement of the *Alabama* claims for the relatively small amount of £3,100,000, the figures written round the edge of the cup which John Bull is very genially handing to the charming female representa-

tive of the United States, whence have come to these islands during the years which now separate us from the year of this cartoon, 1872, so many other charming female representatives of the United States, to make their homes with us.

Nos. 28 and 29 give us a Scotch and an Irish joke drawn by Keene; No. 30 is one of Du Maurier's "socials," and No. 31 is an amusing English joke by Keene.

The *Punch*-period at which we are now peeping—the years 1870–1874—is rich in cartoons of much



"HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY."—*Heed (really in agony about his polished island glow)*. "Haden't you better come on the Carpet, Old Fellow? I'm so afraid you might Slip, you know."
 "Great." "O, it's all right, Old Fellow—Thanks! There's a Nail on the End, you know!"
 24.—PUBLISHED IN 1872.

interest, a few of which I am able to show here, while many others must be omitted.



A WARNING TO ENAMORED CURATES.—*Young Lady*. "And so Adam was very Happy! Now, can you Tell me what great Sorrow fell on him?"
 "Scholar." "Pleese, Miss, he got a Wife!"
 25.—BY DU MAURIER, 1872.

But there is one cartoon which must be mentioned on account of its unique interest, although I have no space to show it.

On July 29, 1871, *Punch* published a cartoon by Tenniel entitled "Ajax Defying the Lightning," which relates to a remarkable instance of the Royal Warrant being made use of, at Mr. Gladstone's instigation, to checkmate the House of Lords upon an important measure abolishing the purchase of commissions in the Army. In the cartoon, Gladstone is depicted as Ajax who grasps in his hand a roll labelled "No Purchase," and defies the forked lightning issuing from a



"BLOOD IS THICKER THAN WATER."—"What is the Matter, De Montbray? You seem Sad and Depressed!"

"How can I Help it, my dear Fellow? It's the Anniversary of a sad Event in our Family. Young Aubrey de Montbray (a Younger Son, but a true De Montbray) fell this Day, by the Hand of a low-born Saxon, at the Battle of Hastings!" [*De Montbray weeps.*] 26.—BY DU MAURIER, 1873.

group of angry Lords, as he supports himself on a great rock labelled "Royal Warrant." The explanation of this famous departure from usual Parliamentary procedure is as follows:—

Gladstone on his accession to power in 1868 resolved to include in his list of reforms the abolition of the purchase of commissions in the Army, a system which prior to that date had been pronounced injurious by various Liberal politicians. On July 3, 1871, the Bill passed its third reading in the House of Commons, and then the Conservative peers in the Lords determined to oppose the scheme of abolition—and they of course had a majority in the Lords.

Suddenly, and while the Lords were preparing to upset the Bill, Gladstone announced that as the system of purchasing commissions



THE LOVING CUP.

27.—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE "ALABAMA" CLAIMS WITH THE UNITED STATES. BY TENNIEL, SEPTEMBER 25, 1872.

in the Army was the creation of Royal regulation, he had advised the Queen to cancel the Royal Warrant which made purchase of commissions legal! This smart move by Gladstone was carried into effect, and the Lords were completely sold.

But smart and successful as was this move of Gladstone's, Mr. Justin McCarthy, who has a long account of this measure in his "History," records that "the hearts of many sincere Liberals sank within them as they



LIKES HIS MONEY'S WORTH.—English Passenger (by the Night Mail North). "Confounded Tedious Journey, this!"
 Scotch Passenger: "Tensions! See it ought to be! (H224 a Green.) Two Pairs Twelve and Sixpence, Second Class—Maister's!"
 28.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1873.



"RELATIVE."—Squire. "Why, Pat, what are you doing, standing by the Wall of the Public-House? I thought you were a Teetotaler!"
 Pat. "Yes, yer Honor. I'm just listening to them Impudent Boys Drinking inside!"
 29.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1873.

heard the announcement of the triumph." The dodge of using the Royal Prerogative to help the Ministry out of a hole was considered even by some of Gladstone's own adherents to be an unwise step, for as the poor, baffled Lords themselves stated in their resolution passing the unwelcome Bill, the Government had succeeded "by the exercise of the prerogative and without the aid of Parliament"—a risky thing for any Ministry to do, thus in serious legislation to put the Royal Prerogative above the procedure of Parliament.

Thus, the important measure abolishing the purchase of commissions in the Army was obtained by the exercise of the Royal Prerogative, not by ordinary Parliamentary procedure; and, strangely enough, this abnormal course was taken by a Liberal Premier, who, moreover, was not a special favourite of the Lady who held—and holds—the Royal Prerogative.

Picture 32 is by Charles Keene. How wonderfully true is the facial expression of the "Contemplative Villager" who, as he leans on the

wooden paling, slowly turns his head towards the Rector with the reply to the Rector's praise of his fine pig: "Ah, yes, Sir, if we was only, all of us, as Fit to Die as him, Sir!"

The cartoon by Tenniel in No. 33, a delightful piece of drawing, represents Germany carrying off from France the war indemnity of £200,000,000. The verses which, in *Punch*, accompany this cartoon are headed:—

VERDUN EVACUATED.

Invaders' tread is off thy soil, fair France.
 Thus, scowling with just hate, behold't
 them go,
 Indignant at unmerited mischance,
 Which brought on thee unutterable woe.
 Etc., etc., etc.



AN EXTINGUISHER.—Forward and Loquacious Youth. "By Jove, you know, upon my Word, now—if I were to see a Ghost, you know, I should be a Chattering Idiot for the Rest of my Life!"
 Ingenious Maiden (dreamily). "Have you Seen a Ghost?"
 30.—BY DU MAURIER, 1873.

Now she retires,
 and leaves thee
 to repair
 Thy ruins, and
 thy shattered
 strength re-
 store;
 To brood upon re-
 venge; or to
 bewail
 Thy neighbours
 of assailing
 any more.

Verdun, a town of France, is also a first-class fortress, one of those forts which the Germans occupied with their

troops after the end of the war as security for the payment of the big indemnity which,



"HINT WITH THEIR OWN PETARD."—Stern Examiner. "For instance, Sir, I should like to hear a Test from you."
 Charley Cresswell. "Well, fact is I haven't loaded my Memory with Tests. But in the Apocrypha (sic) there's mention that 'round about were four great Beasts'—"
 [Flashed.]

31.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1873.



A RUSTIC MORALIST.—*Rector (going his rounds).* "An uncommonly fine Pig, Mr. Dibbles, I declare!"

Contemplative Villager. "Ah, yes, Sir, if we was only, all of us, as fit to Die as him, Sir!!"

32.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1873.

in our cartoon, Germany is carrying away in a bag, and which France got together in a marvellously short time.

I have italicized the concluding words of the verse just quoted: friendly as we were to



33.—THE PAYMENT TO GERMANY BY FRANCE OF THE WAR INDEMNITY OF £500,000,000. BY TENNIEL, SEPTEMBER 27, 1873.

France when she was getting the worse of the fight, we yet did not lose sight of the fact that it was France who sought the war, not Germany. How significant these italicized words of the year 1873 read to us of the present day! Will the internal troubles of

France, which were largely responsible for that rash war, cause *Punch* in the twentieth century to repeat those words so pregnant of meaning to France—*Beware thy neighbours of assailing any more!*

Pictures 34, 35, and 36 are by Du Maurier, and No. 37 is by Charles Keene. The cunning artist, who here shows to us a portly old



A TEMPTING INDUCEMENT.—*Cheerful Agent for Life Assurance Company.* "The Advantage of our Company is, that you do not Forfeit your Policy either by being Hanged or by committing Suicide! Pray take a Prospectus!"

34.—BY DU MAURIER, 1874.

gentleman struck with wonderment at the idea that he was originally a "Primordial Atomic Globule," has deftly suggested by the shape and the development of the old



THE LIND MUST BE DEPART SOMEWHERE!—*My Lady.* "And why did you Leave your lost Situation?" *Sensitive Being.* "Well, my Lady, I hadn't been in the 'Daze' hardly a Month when I succumbed as the Ladies of the Family 'ad never wish been Presented at Court!"

35.—BY DU MAURIER, 1873.



VINDICUS LEXIC.—Respectable Panambroker (rushed from his Showers at 5 a.m. by repeated Knockings at his Door). "Well! What is it?"

KEENE.—"Whatish the Time?"
Respectable Panambroker. "What! Do you mean to say you've got me out of Bed at this Time o' Night to ask me such a Fool's Question as that?—Police! Police!!"

KEENE.—"Well, hang it, Governor—(Ah!)—you've got my Watch!"

36.—BY DU MAURIER, 1874.

gentleman's tummy that he has indeed evolved from a globular ancestry, atomic or otherwise—probably otherwise.

In No. 38 Keene playfully suggests a bicycle corps for the army, little thinking when, in 1874, he drew this picture, that in less than twenty years his idea would become actual fact.



"MATTER!"—Partly Old Swell (in reading Professor Tyndall's Speech). "Dear me! Is it possible! Most extraordinary!—(throws down the Review)—that I should have been originally a 'Personnel Atomic Globule'!"

37.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1874.

Du Maurier satirizes in No. 39 the æsthetic craze of twenty-five years ago. Absurd as was this craze, yet when its extravagances had died away, the movement did useful work in bringing to our persons, homes, and furniture a condition of rational æstheticism that had been wanting for too long. Moreover, even if the æsthetic craze did nothing else, we have to thank it for one of the most delightful of the Savoy operas.



MORE ECOSOMY.—A hint to "Governments." A cheap resort for Light Dragoons!

38.—BY CHARLES KEENE, 1874.

The excellent joke in No. 40 would not appeal to us if we had phonetic spelling, for the point of it is in the different spelling of two same-sounding words—*Law* and *Lor*—a trivial difference in spelling which gives great point to this very clever drawing by Keene.

In the last year of this Punch-period, 1874, was published on February 14 a Tenniel cartoon entitled "Degenerate Days." This cartoon relates to a very famous reform



THE PASSION FOR OLD CHINA.—(Husband). "I think you might let me Nurse that Teapot a little now, Margery! You've had it to yourself all the Morning, you know!"

39.—BY DU MAURIER, 1874.

carried by Gladstone in 1872—The Vote by Ballot at Parliamentary Elections. In the cartoon (not included here) an enraged publican says to a bleary "Free and Independent Voter" who is in his bar—
 "Call this a General Election? Why, it's all over in about a fortnight, and ——" "And not a fi-pun-note among 'em," adds the half-drunk voter.

This general election early in 1874 was the first to take place under the new Vote-by-Ballot Act, previously carried by Gladstone, who in January, 1874, suddenly decided to dissolve Parliament, and to seek for a restoration of the waning Liberal power in the Commons.

"Mr. Gladstone had surprised the constituencies," writes Mr. Justin McCarthy.

pletely the balance of power. In a few days the Liberal majority was gone."

In connection with the cartoon just alluded to, I lately came across a curious example of the extraordinary ignorance of French people about us and our ways. In January, 1899, a Parisian newspaper, *Le Patriote*, said: "In England, where the vote is frankly put up to auction, the voter receives a certain sum from the pocket of the candidate, goes and drinks it, and there's an end of the matter; but in France——," etc., etc.

This extraordinary statement was written in January of this year, mind you, not prior to the "Degenerate Days" of the *Punch* cartoon where the voter by ballot is saying: "And not a fi-pun-note among 'em."



MADDERING.—*Hubert*. "If, as I said before, Matilda, you still cherish that Feeling of Affection for me which you once Professed, my Wish would be Love to you. I repeat it, Matilda—Love!"
Matilda. "Love!" 42.—BY CHARLES KNEELAND, 1874.



A BARGAIN.—"I say, Bobby, just give us a Shove with this 'ere Parcel on to this 'ere Truck, and next Time yer Rags are in, I'll go Quiet!" 41.—BY DU MAURIN, 1874.



THE PROVINCIAL DRAMA.—*The Margate (in the Play)*
 "'Aren't I give' yer the Edification of a Gentleman?'
Lord Adolphus (Spendthrift Heir). "You wot!"
 42.—PUBLISHED IN 1874.

"We do not know whether the constituencies surprised Mr. Gladstone. They certainly surprised most persons, including themselves. The result of the election was to upset com-

Pictures 41 and 42 end the series of peeps, for the years 1870–1874, into ten volumes of *Punch*, which are perhaps the most interesting we have yet looked at.

(To be continued.)

Hilda Wade.

By GRANT ALLEN.

IV.—THE EPISODE OF THE MAN WHO WOULD NOT COMMIT SUICIDE.



AFTER my poor friend Le Geyt had murdered his wife, in a sudden access of uncontrollable anger, under the deepest provocation, the police naturally began to inquire for him. It is a way they have: the police are no respecters of persons; neither do they pry into the question of motives. They are but poor casuists. A murder is for them a murder, and a murderer a murderer: it is not their habit to divide and distinguish between case and case with Hilda Wade's analytical accuracy.

As soon as my duties at St. Nathaniel's permitted me, on the evening of the discovery, I rushed round to Mrs. Mallet's, Le Geyt's sister. I had been detained at the hospital for some hours, however, watching a critical case: and by the time I reached Great Stanhope Street I found Hilda Wade, in her nurse's dress, there before me. Sebastian, it seemed, had given her leave out for the evening: she was a supernumerary nurse, attached to his own observation-cots as special attendant for scientific purposes, and she could generally get an hour or so whenever she required it.

Mrs. Mallet had been in the breakfast-room with Hilda before I arrived: but as I reached the house she rushed upstairs to wash her red eyes and compose herself a

little before the strain of meeting me: so I had the opportunity for a few words alone first with my prophetic companion.

"You said just now at Nathaniel's," I burst out, "that Le Geyt would not be hanged: he would commit suicide. What did you mean by that? What reason had you for thinking so?"

Hilda Wade sank into a chair by the open window, pulled a flower abstractedly from the vase at her side, and began picking it to pieces, floret after floret, with twitching fingers. She was deeply moved. "Well, consider his family history," she burst out at last, looking up at me with her large brown eyes as she reached the last petal. "Hereditary counts. . . . And after such a disaster!"

She said "disaster," not "crime": I noted mentally the reservation implied in the word.

"Hereditary counts," I answered. "Oh, yes. It counts much. But what about Le Geyt's family history?" I could not recall any instance of suicide among his forebears.

"Well—his mother's father was General Faskally, you know," she replied, after a pause, in her strange, oblique manner. "Mr. Le Geyt is General Faskally's eldest grandson."

"Exactly," I broke in, with a man's desire for solid fact in place of vague intuition. "But I fail to see quite what that has to do with it."

"The General was killed in India during the Mutiny."

"I remember, of course—killed, bravely fighting."



"KILLED, BRAVELY FIGHTING."

"Yes; but it was on a forlorn hope, for which he volunteered, and in the course of which he is said to have walked straight into an almost obvious ambushade of the enemy's."

"Now, my dear Miss Wade"—I always dropped the title of "Nurse" by request, when once we were well clear of Nathaniel's—"I have every confidence, you are aware, in your memory and your insight; but I do confess I fail to see what bearing this incident can have on poor Hugo's chances of being hanged or committing suicide."

She picked a second flower, and once more pulled out petal after petal. As she reached the last again, she answered, slowly, "You must have forgotten the circumstances. It was no mere accident. General Faskally had made a serious strategical blunder at Jhansi. He had sacrificed the lives of his subordinates needlessly. He could not bear to face the survivors. In the course of the retreat, he volunteered to go on this forlorn hope, which might equally well have been led by an officer of lower rank: and he was permitted to do so by Sir Colin in command, as a means of retrieving his lost military character. He carried his point: but he carried it recklessly: taking care to be shot through the heart himself in the first onslaught. That was virtual suicide—honourable suicide to avoid disgrace, at a moment of supreme remorse and horror."

"You are right," I admitted, after a minute's consideration. "I see it now—though I should never have thought of it."

"That is the use of being a woman," she answered.

I waited a second once more, and mused. "Still, that is only one doubtful case," I objected.

"There was another, you must remember: his uncle Alfred."

"Alfred Le Geyt?"

"No; *he* died in his bed, quietly. Alfred Faskally."

"What a memory you have!" I cried, astonished. "Why, that was before our time—in the days of the Chartist riots!"

She smiled a certain curious sly smile of hers. Her earnest face looked prettier than ever. "I told you I could remember many things that happened before I was born," she answered. "*This* is one of them."

"You remember it directly?"

"How impossible! Have I not often explained to you that I am no diviner? I read no book of fate: I call no spirits from the vasty deep. I simply remember with

exceptional clearness what I read and hear. And I have many times heard the story about Alfred Faskally."

"So have I—but, I forget it."

"Unfortunately, I *can't* forget. That is a sort of disease with me. . . . He was a special constable in the Chartist riots: and being a very strong and powerful man, like his nephew Hugo, he used his truncheon—his special constable's *baton* or whatever you call it—with excessive force upon a starveling London tailor in the mob near Charing Cross. The man was hit on the forehead—badly hit, so that he died almost immediately of concussion of the brain. A woman rushed out of the crowd, at once, seized the dying man, laid his head on her lap, and shrieked out in a wildly despairing voice that he was her husband and the father of thirteen children. Alfred Faskally, who never meant to kill the man, or even to hurt him, but who was laying about him roundly without realizing the terrific force of his blows, was so horrified at what he had done when he heard the woman's cry, that he rushed off straight to Waterloo Bridge in an agony of remorse and—flung himself over. He was drowned instantly."

"I recall the story now," I answered: "but, do you know, as it was told me, I think they said the mob *threw* Faskally over in their desire for vengeance."

"That is the official account, as told by the Le Geyts and the Faskallys: they like to have it believed their kinsman was murdered, not that he committed suicide. But my grandfather—I started: during the twelve months that I had been brought into daily relations with Hilda Wade that was the first time I had heard her mention any member of her own family, except once her mother—"my grandfather, who knew him well, and who was present in the crowd at the time, assured me many times that Alfred Faskally really jumped over of his own accord, *not* pursued by the mob, and that his last horrified words as he leaped were, 'I never meant it! I never meant it!' However, the family have always had luck in their suicides. The jury believed the throwing-over story, and found a verdict of 'wilful murder' against some person or persons unknown."

"Luck in their suicides! What a curious phrase! And you say, *always*. Were there other cases, then?"

"Constructively, yes: one of the Le Geyts, you must recollect, went down with his ship (just like his uncle, the General, in India)

when he might have quitted her: it is believed he had given a mistaken order. You remember, of course, he was navigating lieutenant. Another, Marcus, was *said* to have shot himself by accident while cleaning his gun—after a quarrel with his wife. But you have heard all about it. 'The wrong was on my side,' he moaned, you know, when they picked him up, dying, in the gun-room. And one of the Faskally girls, his cousins, of whom his wife was jealous—that beautiful Linda—became a Catholic and went into a convent at once on Marcus's death: which, after all, in such cases, is merely a religious and moral way of committing suicide—I mean, for a woman who takes the veil just to cut herself off from the world, and who has no vocation, as I hear she had not."

She filled me with amazement. "That is true," I exclaimed, "when one comes to think of it. It shows the same temperament in fibre . . . But, I should never have thought of it."

"No? Well, I believe it is true for all that. In every case, one sees they choose much the same way of meeting a reverse, a blunder, an unpremeditated crime. The brave way is, to go through with it, and face the music, letting what will come: the cowardly way is, to hide one's head incontinently in a river, a noose, or a convent cell."

"Le Geyt is not a coward," I interposed, with warmth.

"No, not a coward—a manly-spirited, great-hearted gentleman—but still, not quite of the bravest type. He lacks one element.

The Le Geyts have physical courage—enough and to spare—but their moral courage fails them at a pinch. They rush into suicide or its equivalent at critical moments, out of pure boyish impulsiveness."

A few minutes later Mrs. Mallet came in. She was not broken down—on the contrary, she was calm—stoically, tragically, pitifully calm, with that ghastly

calmness which is more terrible by far than the most demonstrative grief. Her face, though deadly white, did not move a muscle. Not a tear was in her eyes. Even her bloodless hands hardly twitched at the folds of her hastily-assumed black gown. She clenched them after a minute, when she had grasped mine silently: I could see that the nails dug deep into the palms in her painful resolve to keep herself from collapsing.

Hilda Wade, with infinite sisterly tenderness, led her over to a chair by the window in the summer twilight, and took one quivering hand in hers. "I have been telling Dr. Cumberland, Lina, about what I most fear for your dear brother, darling: and . . . I think

. . . he agrees with me."

Mrs. Mallet turned to me, with hollow eyes, still preserving her tragic calm. "I am afraid of it too," she said, her drawn lips tremulous. "Dr. Cumberland, we must get him back! We must induce him to face it!"

"And yet," I answered, slowly, turning it over in my own mind, "he has run away at first. Why should he do that if he means—



"FLUNG HIMSELF OVER."

to commit suicide?" I hated to utter the words before that broken soul; but there was no way out of it.

Hilda interrupted me with a quiet suggestion. "How do you know he has run away?" she asked. "Are you not taking it for granted that, if he meant suicide, he would blow his brains out in his own house? But surely that would not be the Le Geyt way. They are gentle-natured folk: they would never blow their brains out or cut their throats. For all we know, he may have made straight for Waterloo Bridge," she framed her lips to the unspoken words, unseen by Mrs. Mallet, "like his uncle Alfred."

"That is true," I answered, lip-reading. "I never thought of that either."

"Still, I do not attach importance to this idea," she went on. "I have some reason for thinking he has run away . . . elsewhere; and if so, our first task must be to entice him back again."

"What are your reasons?" I asked, humbly. Whatever they might be, I knew enough of Hilda Wade by this time to know that she had probably good grounds for accepting them.

"Oh, they may wait for the present," she answered. "Other things are more pressing. First, let Lina tell you what she thinks of most moment."

Mrs. Mallet braced herself up visibly to a distressing effort. "You have seen the body, Dr. Camberledge?" she faltered.

"No, dear Mrs. Mallet, I have not. I came straight from Nathaniel's. I have had no time to see it."

"Dr. Sebastian has viewed it by my wish—he has been so kind—and he will be present as representing the family at the post-mortem. He notes that the wound was inflicted with a dagger—a small ornamental Norwegian dagger, which always lay, as I know, on the little what-not by the blue sofa."

I nodded assent. "Exactly, I have seen it there."

"It was blunt and rusty—a mere toy knife—not at all the sort of weapon a man would make use of who designed to commit a deliberate murder. The crime, if there *was* a crime (which we do not admit), must therefore have been wholly unpremeditated."

I bowed my head. "For us who knew Hugo, that goes without saying."

She lent forward eagerly. "Dr. Sebastian has pointed out to me a line of defence which would probably succeed—if we could only induce poor Hugo to adopt it. He has ex-

amined the blade and scabbard, and finds that the dagger fits its sheath very tight, so that it can only be withdrawn with considerable violence. The blade sticks." (I nodded again.) "It needs a hard pull to wrench it out He has also inspected the wound, and assures me its character is such that it *might* have been self-inflicted." She paused now and again, and brought out her words with difficulty. "Self-inflicted, he suggests: therefore, that *this* may have happened. It is admitted—*will* be admitted—the servants overheard it—we can make no reservation there—a difference of opinion, an altercation even, took place between Hugo and Clara that evening"—she started suddenly—"why, it was only last night—it seems like ages—an altercation about the children's schooling. Clara held strong views on the subject of the children"—her eyes blinked hard—"which Hugo did not share. We throw out the hint, then, that Clara, during the course of the dispute—we must call it a dispute—accidentally took up this dagger and toyed with it. You know her habit of toying, when she had no knitting or needlework. In the course of playing with it (we suggest) she tried to pull the knife out of its sheath: failed: held it up, so, point upward: pulled again: pulled harder—with a jerk, at last, the sheath came off: the dagger sprang up: it wounded Clara fatally. Hugo, knowing that they had disagreed, knowing that the servants had heard, and seeing her fall suddenly dead before him, was seized with horror—the Le Geyt impulsiveness!—lost his head: rushed out: fancied the accident would be mistaken for murder. But why? A Q.C., don't you know! Recently married! Most attached to his wife. It is plausible, isn't it?"

"So plausible," I answered, looking it straight in the face, "that . . . it has but one weak point. We might make a coroner's jury or even a common jury accept it, on Sebastian's expert evidence: Sebastian can work wonders; but we could never make—"

Hilda Wade finished the sentence for me as I paused: "Hugo Le Geyt consent to advance it."

I lowered my head. "You have said it," I answered.

"Not for the children's sake?" Mrs. Mallet cried, with clasped hands.

"Not for the children's sake even," I answered. "Consider for a moment, Mrs. Mallet: *is* it true? Do you yourself *believe* it?"

She threw herself back in her chair with a dejected face. "Oh, as for that," she cried, wearily, crossing her hands, "before you and Hilda, who know all, what need to prevaricate? How *can* I believe it? We understand how it came about. That woman! That woman!"

"The real wonder is," Hilda murmured, soothing her white hand, "that he contained himself so long!"

"Well, we all know Hugo," I went on, as quietly as I was able; "and, knowing Hugo, we know that he might be urged to commit this wild act in a fierce moment of indignation—righteous indignation on behalf of his motherless girls, under tremendous provocation. But we also know that, having once committed it, he would never stoop to disown it by a subterfuge."

The heart-broken sister let her head drop faintly. "So Hilda told me," she murmured, "and what Hilda says in these matters is almost always final."

We debated the question for some minutes more: then Mrs. Mallet cried at last, "At any rate, he has fled for the moment, and his flight alone brings the worst suspicion upon him. That is our chief point. We must find out where he is, and if he has gone right away, we must bring him back to London."

"Where do you think he has taken refuge?"

"The police, Dr. Sebastian has ascertained, are watching the railway stations, and the ports for the Continent."

"Very like the police!" Hilda exclaimed, with more than a touch of contempt in her voice. "As if a clever man-of-the-world like Hugo Le Geyt would run away by rail, or start off to the Continent! Every Englishman is noticeable on the Continent. It would be sheer madness."

"You think he has not gone there, then?" I cried, deeply interested.

"Of course not. That is the point I hinted at just now. He has defended many persons accused of murder, and he often spoke to me of their incredible folly, when trying to escape, in going by rail, or in setting out from England for Paris. An Englishman, he used to say, is least observed in his own country. In this case, I think I *know* where he has gone, and how he went there."

"Where, then?"

"Where comes last: *how* first. It is a question of inference."

"Explain. We know your powers."

"Well, I take it for granted that he killed

her—we must not mince matters—about twelve o'clock: for after that hour, the servants told Lina, there was quiet in the drawing-room. Next, I conjecture, he went upstairs to change his clothes; he could not go forth on the world in an evening suit: and the housemaid says his black coat and trousers were lying as usual on a chair in his dressing-room: which shows at least that he was not unduly flurried. After that, he put on another suit, no doubt—*what* suit I hope the police will not discover too soon: for I suppose you must just accept the situation that we are conspiring to defeat the ends of justice."

"No, no," Mrs. Mallet cried. "To bring him back voluntarily, that he may face his trial like a man!"

"Yes, dear. That is quite right. However, the next thing, of course, would be that he would shave in whole or in part. His big black beard was so very conspicuous: he would certainly get rid of that before attempting to escape. The servants being in bed, he was not pressed for time: he had the whole night before him. So, of course, he shaved. On the other hand, the police, you



"HE WOULD CERTAINLY GET RID OF THAT."

may be sure, will circulate his photograph—we must not shirk these points”—for Mrs. Mallet winced again—“will circulate his photograph, *beard and all*; and that will really be one of our great safeguards: for the bushy beard so masks the face that, without it, Hugo would be scarcely recognisable. I conclude, therefore, that he must have shorn himself *before* leaving home, though naturally I did not make the police a present of the hint by getting Lina to ask any questions in that direction of the housemaid.”

“You are probably right,” I answered. “But, would he have a razor?”

“I was coming to that: no: certainly he would not. He had not shaved for years. And they kept no men-servants: which makes it difficult for him to borrow one from a sleeping man. So what he would do would doubtless be to cut off his beard, or part of it, quite close, with a pair of scissors, and then get himself properly shaved next morning in the first country town he came to.”

“The first country town?”

“Certainly. That leads up to the next point. We must try to be cool and collected.” She was quivering with suppressed emotion herself as she said it, but her soothing hand still lay on Mrs. Mallet’s. “The next thing is—he would leave London.”

“But not by rail, you say?”

“He is an intelligent man, and in the course of defending others has thought about this matter. Why expose himself to the needless risk and observation of a railway station? No: I saw at once what he would do: beyond doubt, he would cycle. He always wondered it was not done oftener under similar circumstances.”

“But has his bicycle gone?”

“Lina looked. It has not. I should have expected as much. I told her to note that point very unobtrusively, so as to avoid giving the police the clue. She saw the machine in the outer hall as usual.”

“He is too good a criminal lawyer to have dreamt of taking his own,” Mrs. Mallet interposed, with another effort.

“But where could he have hired or bought one at that time of night?” I exclaimed.

“Nowhere—without exciting the gravest

suspicion. Therefore, I conclude, he stopped in London for the night, sleeping at an hotel, without luggage, and paying for his room in advance: it is frequently done, and if he arrived late, very little notice would be taken of him. Big hotels about the Strand, I am told, have always a dozen such casual bachelor guests every evening.”

“And then?”

“And then, this morning, he would buy a new bicycle—a different make from his own, at the nearest shop; would rig himself out, at some ready-made tailor’s, with a fresh tourist suit—probably an ostentatiously tweedy bicycling suit; and with that in his luggage carrier, would make straight on his machine for the country. He could change in some copse, and bury his own clothes, avoiding the blunders he has seen in others. Perhaps he might ride for the first twenty



“HE COULD CHANGE IN SOME COPSE.”

or thirty miles out of London to some minor side-station, and then go on by train towards his destination, quitting the rail again at some unimportant point where the main west road crosses the Great Western or the South-Western line.”

"Great Western or South-Western? Why those two in particular? Then you have settled in your own mind which direction he has taken?"

"Pretty well. I judge by analogy. Lina, your brother was brought up in the West Country, was he not?"

Mrs. Mallet gave a weary nod. "In North Devon," she answered: "on the wild stretch of moor about Hartland and Clovelly."

Hilda Wade seemed to collect herself. "Now, Mr. Le Geyt is essentially a Celt—a Celt in temperament," she went on: "he comes by origin and ancestry from a rough, heather-clad country: he belongs to the moorland. In other words, his type is the mountaineer's. But a mountaineer's instinct in similar circumstances is—what? Why, to fly straight to his native mountains. In an agony of terror, in an access of despair, when all else fails, he strikes a bee-line for the hills he loves: rationally or irrationally, he seems to think he can hide there. Hugo Le Geyt, with his frank boyish nature, his great Devonian frame, is sure to have done so. I know his mood. He has made for the West Country!"

"You are right, Hilda," Mrs. Mallet exclaimed, with conviction. "I'm quite sure from what I know of Hugo that to go to the west would be his first impulse."

"And the Le Geys are always governed by first impulses," my character-reader added.

She was quite correct. From the time we two were at Oxford together—I as an undergraduate, he as a don—I had always noticed that marked trait in my dear old friend's temperament.

After a short pause, Hilda broke the silence again. "The sea, again; the sea! The Le Geys love the water. Was there any place on the sea where he went much as a boy—any lonely place, I mean, in that North Devon district?"

Mrs. Mallet reflected a moment. "Yes, there was a little bay—a mere gap in high cliffs, with some fishermen's huts and a few yards of beach—where he used to spend much of his holidays. It was a weird-looking break in a grim sea-wall of dark-red rocks, where the tide rose high, rolling in from the Atlantic."

"The very thing! Has he visited it since he grew up?"

"To my knowledge, never."

Hilda's voice had a ring of certainty. "Then *that* is where we shall find him, dear! We must look there first. He is

sure to revisit just such a solitary spot by the sea when trouble overtakes him."

Later in the evening, as we were walking home towards Nathaniel's together, I asked Hilda why she had spoken throughout with such unwavering confidence. "Oh, it was simple enough," she answered. "There were two things that helped me through, which I didn't like to mention in detail before Lina. One was this: the Le Geys have all of them an instinctive horror of the sight of blood: therefore, they almost never commit suicide by shooting themselves or cutting their throats. Marcus, who shot himself in the gun-room, was an exception to both rules: he never minded blood: he could cut up a deer. But Hugo refused to be a doctor, because he could not stand the sight of an operation: and even, as a sportsman, he never liked to pick up or handle the game he had shot himself: he said it sickened him. He rushed from that room last night, I feel sure, in a physical horror at the deed he had done: and by now he is as far as he can get from London. The sight of his act drove him away, not craven fear of an arrest. If the Le Geys kill themselves—a seafaring race on the whole—their impulse is—to trust to water."

"And the other thing?"

"Well, that was about the mountaineer's homing instinct. I have often noticed it. I could give you fifty instances, only I didn't like to speak of them before Lina. There was Williams, for example, the Dolgelly man who killed a gamekeeper at Petworth in a poaching affray: he was taken on Cader Idris, skulking among rocks, a week later. Then there was that unhappy young fellow Mackinnon, who shot his sweetheart at Leicester: he made, straight as the crow flies, for his home in the Isle of Skye, and there drowned himself in familiar waters. Lindner, the Tyrolean, again, who stabbed the American swindler at Monte Carlo, was tracked after a few days to his native place, St. Valentin in the Zillerthal. It is always so. Mountaineers in distress fly to their mountains. It is a part of their nostalgia. I know it from within, too: if I were in poor Hugo Le Geyt's place, what do you think I would do?—why, hide myself at once in the greenest recesses of our Camarvonshire mountains."

"What an extraordinary insight into character you have!" I cried. "You seem to divine what everybody's action will be under given circumstances."

She paused and held her parasol half poised in her hand. "Character determines action," she said, slowly at last. "That is the secret of the great novelists. They put themselves behind and within their

She herself proposed to set out quietly for Bideford, where she would be within easy reach of me, in order to hear of my success or failure; while Hilda Wade, whose summer vacation was to have begun in two days'



"THE DOLGELL MAN."

characters, and so make us feel that every act of their personages is not only natural but even, given the conditions, inevitable. We recognise that their story is the sole logical outcome of the interaction of their *dramatis personæ*. Now, I am not a great novelist: I cannot create and imagine characters and situations. But I have something of the novelist's gift: I apply the same method to the real life of the people around me. I try to throw myself into the person of others, and to feel how their character will compel them to act in each set of circumstances to which they may expose themselves."

"In one word," I said, "you are a psychologist."

"A psychologist," she assented: "I suppose so: and the police—well, the police are not: they are at best but bungling materialists. They require a *clue*. What need of a *clue* if you can interpret character?"

So certain was Hilda Wade of her conclusions, indeed, that Mrs. Mallet begged me next day to take my holiday at once—which I could easily do—and go down to the little bay in the Hartland district of which she had spoken, in search of Hugo. I consented.

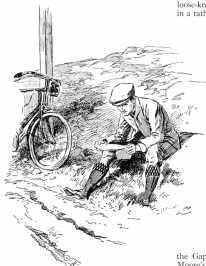
time, offered to ask for an extra day's leave so as to accompany her. The broken-hearted sister accepted the offer: and, secrecy being above all things necessary, we set off by different routes: the two women by Waterloo, myself by Paddington.

We stopped that night at different hotels in Bideford; but next morning, Hilda rode out on her bicycle, and accompanied me on mine for a mile or two along the tortuous way towards Hartland. "Take nothing for granted," she said, as we parted; "and be prepared to find poor Hugo Le Geyt's appearance greatly changed. He has eluded the police and their 'clues' so far; therefore, I imagine he must have largely altered his dress and exterior."

"I will find him," I answered, "if he is anywhere within twenty miles of Hartland."

She waved her hand to me in farewell. I rode on after she left me towards the high promontory in front, the wildest and least-visited part of North Devon. Torrents of rain had fallen during the night: the slimy cart-ruts and cattle-tracks on the moor were brimming with water. It was a lowering day. The clouds drifted low. Black peat-

bogs filled the hollows: grey stone homesteads, lonely and forbidding, stood out here and there against the curved sky-line. Even the high road was uneven, and in places flooded. For an hour I passed hardly a soul: at last, near a cross-road, with a defaced finger-post, I descended from my machine and consulted my ordnance map,



"I CONSULTED MY ORDNANCE MAP."

on which Mrs. Mallet had marked ominously, with a cross of red ink, the exact position of the little fishing hamlet where Hugo used to spend his holidays. I took the turning which seemed to me most likely to lead to it: but the tracks were so confused and the run of the lanes so uncertain—let alone the map being some years out of date—that I soon felt I had lost my bearings. By a little wayside inn, half hidden in a deep combe, with bog on every side, I descended and asked for a bottle of ginger-beer; for the day was hot and close, in spite of the packed clouds. As they were opening the bottle, I inquired casually the way to the Red Gap bathing-place.

The landlord gave me directions which

confused me worse than ever, ending at last with the concise remark, "An' then, zur, two or dree more turns to the right an' to the left 'ull bring 'ee right up alongside o' us."

I despaired of finding the way by these unintelligible sailing-orders: but just at that moment, as luck would have it, another cyclist flew past—the first soul I had seen on the road that morning. He was a man with the loose-knit air of a shop-assistant, badly got up in a rather loud and obtrusive tourist suit of brown homespun, with baggy knickerbockers and thin thread stockings. I judged him a gentleman on the cheap at sight: "Very Stylish; this Suit Complete, only thirty-seven and sixpence!" The landlady glanced out at him with a friendly nod. He turned and smiled at her, but did not see me: for I stood in the shade behind the half-open door. He had a short, black moustache, and a not unpleasing, careless face. His features, I thought, were better than his garments.

However, the stranger did not interest me just then: I was far too full of more important matters. "Why don't 'ee taake an' vollow thik ther gen'leman, zur?" the landlady said, pointing one large red hand after him. "Ur do go down to Urd Gap to swim every marnin'. Mr. Jan Smith, o' Oxford, they do call un. 'Ee can't go wrong if 'ee do vollow un to the Gap. Ur's lodgin' up to wold Varmer Moore's, an' ur's that vond o' the zay, the vishermen do tell me, as wasn't never any gen'leman like un."

I tossed off my ginger-beer, jumped on to my machine, and followed the retreating brown back of Mr. John Smith, of Oxford—surely a most non-committing name—round sharp corners and over rutty lanes, tyre-deep in mud, across the rusty-red moor, till, all at once at a turn, a gap of stormy sea appeared wedge-shape between two shelving rock-walls.

It was a lonely spot. Rocks hemmed it in: big breakers walled it. The sou'-wester roared through the gap. I rode down among loose stones and water-worn channels in the solid grit very carefully. But the man in brown had torn over the wild path with reckless haste, zig-zagging madly, and was now on the little three-cornered patch of

beach, undressing himself with a sort of careless glee, and flinging his clothes down anyhow on the shingle beside him. Something about the action caught my eye. That movement of the arm! It was not—it could not be—no, no, not Hugo!

A very ordinary person: and Le Geyt bore the stamp of a born gentleman.

He stood up bare at last. He flung out his arms as if to welcome the boisterous wind to his naked bosom. Then, with a sudden burst of recognition, the man stood revealed. We had bathed together a hundred times in London and elsewhere. The face, the clad figure, the dress, all were

cork: but like a cork he rose again. He was swimming now, arm over arm, straight out seaward. I saw the lifted hands between the crest and the trough. For a moment I hesitated whether I ought to strip and follow him. Was he doing as so many other of his house had done—courting death from the water?

But some strange hand restrained me. Who was I that I should stand between Hugo Le Geyt and the ways of Providence?



"HE FLUNG OUT HIS ARMS."

different. But the body—the actual frame and make of the man—the well-knit limbs, the splendid trunk—no disguise could alter. It was Le Geyt himself—big, powerful, vigorous.

That ill-made suit, those baggy knickerbockers, the slouched cap, the thin thread stockings, had only distorted and hidden his figure: now that I saw him as he was, he came out the same bold and manly form as ever.

He did not notice me. He rushed down with a certain wild joy into the turbulent water, and plunging in with a loud cry, buffeted the huge waves with those strong curving arms of his. The sea-wester was rising. Each breaker as it reared caught him on its crest and tumbled him over like a

The Le Geys loved ever the ordeal by water.

Presently, he turned again. Before he turned, I had taken the opportunity to look hastily at his clothes. Hilda Wade had surmised aright once more. The outer suit was a cheap affair from a big ready-made tailor's in St. Martin's Lane—turned out by the thousand: the underclothing, on the other hand, was new and unmarked, but fine in quality—bought, no doubt, at Bideford. An eerie sense of doom stole over me. I felt the end was near. I withdrew behind a big rock, and waited there unseen till Hugo had landed. He began to dress again, without troubling to dry himself. I drew a deep breath of relief. Then this was not suicide!

By the time he had pulled on his vest and drawers, I came out suddenly from my ambush and faced him. A fresh shock awaited me. I could hardly believe my

defence—the plausibility of the explanation—the whole long story. He gazed at me moodily. Yet it was not Hugo!

"No, no," he said, shortly; and as he



"THE MAN ROSE WITH A LITTLE CRY AND ADVANCED."

eyes. It was *not* Le Geyt—no, nor anything like him!

Nevertheless, the man rose with a little cry and advanced, half crouching, towards me. "You are not hunting me down—with the police?" he exclaimed, his neck held low and his forehead wrinkling.

The voice—the voice was Le Geyt's. It was an unspeakable mystery. "Hugo," I cried, "dear Hugo—hunting you down?—*could* you imagine it?"

He raised his head, strode forward, and grasped my hand. "Forgive me, Cumberland," he cried. "But a proscribed and hounded man! If you knew what a relief it is to me to get out on the water!"

"You forget all there?"

"I forget IT—the red horror!"

"You meant just now to drown yourself?"

"No! If I had meant it I would have done it. . . . Hubert, for my children's sake, I *will* not commit suicide!"

"Then listen!" I cried. I told him in a few words his sister's scheme—Sebastian's

spoke it was *he*. "I have done it; I have killed her; I will not owe my life to a falsehood."

"Not for the children's sake?"

He dashed his hand down impatiently. "I have a better way for the children. I will save them still. . . . Hubert, you are not afraid to speak to a murderer?"

"Dear Hugo—I know all: and to know all is to forgive all."

He grasped my hand once more. "Know *all*!" he cried, with a despairing gesture. "Oh, no: no one knows *all* but myself: not even the children. But the children know much: *they* will forgive me. Lina knows something: *she* will forgive me. You know a little: *you* forgive me. The world can never know. It will brand my darlings as a murderer's children."

"It was the act of a minute," I interposed. "And—though she is dead, poor lady, and one must speak no ill of her—we can at least gather dimly, for your children's sake, how deep was the provocation."

He gazed at me fixedly. His voice was like lead. "For the children's sake—yes," he answered, as in a dream. "It was all for the children! I have killed her—murdered her—she has paid her penalty; and, poor dead soul, I will utter no word against her—the woman I have murdered! But one thing I will say: If omniscient justice sends me for this to eternal punishment, I can endure it gladly, like a man, knowing that so I have redeemed my Marian's motherless girls from a deadly tyranny."

It was the only sentence in which he ever alluded to her.

I sat down by his side and watched him close. Mechanically, methodically, he went on with his dressing. The more he dressed, the less could I believe it was Hugo. I had expected to find him close-shaven: so did the police, by their printed notices. Instead of that, he had shaved his beard and whiskers, but only trimmed his moustache, trimmed it quite short, so as to reveal the boyish corners of the mouth—a trick which entirely altered his rugged expression. But that was not all: what puzzled me most was the eyes—they were not Hugo's. At first I could not imagine why: by degrees, the truth dawned upon me. His eyebrows were naturally thick and shaggy—great overhanging growth, interspersed with many of those stiff long hairs to which Darwin called attention in certain men as surviving traits from a monkey-like ancestor. In order to disguise himself, Hugo had pulled out all these coarser hairs, leaving nothing on his brows but the soft and closely-pressed coat of down which underlies the longer bristles in all such cases. This had wholly altered the expression of the eyes, which no longer looked out keenly from their cavernous penthouse, but being deprived of their relief, had acquired a much more ordinary and less individual aspect. From a good-natured but shaggy giant my old friend was transformed by his shaving and his costume into a well-fed and well-grown, but not very colossal, commercial gentleman. Hugo was scarcely six feet high, indeed, though by his broad shoulders and bushy beard he had always impressed one with such a sense of size: and now that the hirsuteness had been got rid of, and the dress altered, he hardly struck one as taller or bigger than the average of his fellows.

We sat for some minutes and talked. Le Geyt would not speak of Clara: and when I asked him his intentions, he shook his head moodily. "I shall act for the best," he said—"what of best is left—to guard the

dear children. It was a terrible price to pay for their redemption; but it was the only one possible: and, in a moment of wrath, I paid it. Now, I have to pay, in turn, myself. I do not shirk it."

"You will come back to London, then, and stand your trial?" I asked, eagerly.

"Come back to London?" he cried, with a face of white panic. Hitherto he had seemed to me rather relieved in expression than otherwise: his countenance had lost its worn and anxious look: he was no longer watching each moment over his children's safety. "Come back . . . to London . . . and face my trial! Why, did you think, Hubert, 'twas the court or the hanging I was shirking? No, no, not that; but IT—the red horror! I must get away from it to the sea—to the water—to wash away the stain—as far from it—that red pool—as possible!"

I answered nothing. I left him to face his own remorse in silence.

At last he rose to go, and held one foot undecided on his bicycle.

"I leave myself in Heaven's hands," he said, as he lingered. "It will requite . . . The ordeal is by water."

"So I judged," I answered.

"Tell Lina this from me," he went on, still loitering: "that if she will trust me, I will strive to do the best that remains for my darlings. I will do it, Heaven helping. She will know *what*, to-morrow."

He mounted his machine and sailed off. My eyes followed him up the path with sad forebodings.

All day long I loitered about the Gap. It consisted of two bays—the one I had already seen, and another, divided from it by a saw-edge of rock. In the further cove crouched a few low, stone cottages. A broad-bottomed sailing-boat lay there, pulled up high on the beach. About three o'clock, as I sat and watched, two men began to launch it. The sea ran high: tide coming in: the sou'-wester still increasing in force to a gale: at the signal-staff on the cliff, the danger-cone hoisted. White spray danced in air. Big black clouds rolled up seething from windward: low thunder rumbling: a storm threatened.

One of the men was Le Geyt: the other, a fisherman.

He jumped in and put off through the surf with an air of triumph. He was a splendid sailor. His boat leapt through the breakers and flew before the wind with a mere rag of canvas. "Dangerous weather to be out!" I exclaimed to the fisherman,

who stood with hands buried in his pockets, watching him.

"Ay, that ur be, zur!" the man answered. "Doan't like the look o' ut. But thik there gen'elman, 'e's one o' Oxford, 'e do tell me: and they 'm a main venturesome lot, they college volk. 'E's off by 'isself droo the starm, all so var as Lundy!"

"Will he reach it?" I asked, anxiously, having my own idea on the subject.

"Doan't seem like ut, zur, do ut? Ur must, an' ur mustn't, an' yit again ur must. Powerful 'ard place ur be to maäke in a starm, to be zure, Lundy. Zaid the Lord 'ould decide. But ur 'ouldn't be warned, ur 'ouldn't; an' voolhardy volk, as the zayin' is, must go their own voolhardy wäy to perdition!"

It was the last I saw of Le Geyt alive. Next morning the lifeless body of "the man who was wanted for the Campden Hill mystery" was cast up by the waves on the shore of Lundy. The Lord had decided.

missive verdict of "Death by misadventure." The coroner thought it a most proper finding. Mrs. Mallet had made the most of the innate Le Geyt horror of blood: the newspapers charitably surmised that the unhappy husband, crazed by the instantaneous unexpectedness of his loss, had wandered away like a madman to the scenes of his childhood, and had there been drowned by accident while trying to cross a stormy sea to Lundy, under some wild impression that he would find his dead wife alive on the island. Nobody whispered *murder*. Everybody dwelt on the utter absence of motive—a model husband!—such a charming young wife and such a devoted stepmother. We three alone knew—we three, and the children.

On the day when the jury brought in their verdict at the adjourned inquest on Mrs. Le Geyt, Hilda Wade stood in the room trembling and white-faced, awaiting their decision. When the foreman uttered the words, "Death by misadventure," she burst



"THE LORD HAD DECIDED."

Hugo had not miscalculated. "Luck in their suicides," Hilda Wade said: and, strange to say, the luck of the Le Geys stood him in good stead still. By a miracle of fate, his children were not branded as a murderer's daughters. Sebastian gave evidence at the inquest on the wife's body: "self-inflicted—a recoil—accidental—I am sure of it." His specialist knowledge—his assertive certainty, combined with that arrogant, masterful manner of his, and his keen, eagle eye, overbore the jury. Awed by the great man's look, they brought in a sub-

into tears of relief. "He did well!" she cried to me, passionately. "He did well, that poor father! He placed his life in the hands of his Maker, asking only for mercy to his innocent children. And mercy has been shown to him, and to them. He was taken gently in the way he wished. It would have broken my heart for those two poor girls if the verdict had gone otherwise. He knew how terrible a lot it is to be called a murderer's daughter."

I did not realize at the time with what profound depth of personal feeling she said it.

Rearing a Derby Winner.



THE great race of 1899, that which makes the little town of Epsom the centre of attraction from one end of the world to the other for a short time in the year, by the time these lines appear in print will have joined hands with the one hundred and nineteen Derbys that have gone before. It is perfectly safe to say that, wherever Englishmen congregate, there the Derby and the candidates for the "Blue Ribbon of the Turf" have been amongst the chief items of discussion. Indeed, such an interest is taken in the result of the premier classic race, that within an hour of its finish the result is known throughout the four quarters of the globe.

The inception of the first Derby is an oft-told tale, so that nothing more shall be said here about it beyond that it was run on Thursday, May 4th, 1780, and was won by *Diomed* for Sir Charles Bunbury. Of its history much might be written, whilst many stories of old-time trainers and jockeys might be told; but, interesting though it would be to trace the history and tell the tales, it is apart from the purpose of this

article to do so. Rather is it our desire to record by pen and picture the progress of the racehorse from his dam's side, through his early youth, until his proud owner leads him in the honoured winner of the "Blue Ribbon of the Turf" on the eventful Wednesday afternoon which shall send down his name to posterity.

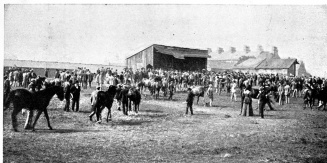
We will first take a stroll round the stud-paddock, where the friendly breeder has told us his favourite foal can be seen. There he is by his dam's side, with disproportionately long legs and big head, to all appearance as unlikely as possible to develop into a shapely three-year-old fit to run in and win the Derby. But an observant and capable critic sees many promising points that either escape the layman's attention or of which he is ignorant. The professional is certain, not only from his knowledge of the colt's parents, but from a sight of the youngster himself, that his career is not likely to end ingloriously, and is loud in his praises of the promising youngster. Here it may be well to mention that the age of a colt is reckoned from the first of January; thus, if he is born in December he becomes a yearling in the following



From a photo. by

EARLY DAYS.

[B. A. Booth.]



From a Photo. by]

IN THE DOWCASTON SALE-PADDOCK.

[W. A. Rook.

month. For this reason breeders prefer that their foals should be born early in the year rather than towards its close. Various opinions are held as to the best month, but to take the view of the majority, late February or early March is reckoned the best time. The importance of the date of the foal's birth will be realized when it is explained that if he is obliged to compete with a horse who is both nominally and actually two years old, when he himself is little more than twelve months of age—although nominally a two-year-old—there is little chance of success attending, at any rate, his early career.

After leaving his dam's side the youngster generally goes to the great September sales, where he is handled and criticised from every standpoint. As in the stud-paddock, so in the sale-ring his points and

pedigree are discussed at length, and as Mr. Tattersall encourages the bidders, heads keep nodding until the brown colt by Jew's Harp out of Accordion is knocked down at a heavy figure to one who hopes both to recoup himself and to have the honour of leading in a Derby winner. Just about now the serious work of the thoroughbred usually has commenced. Some breeders of stock believe in beginning the preliminary education of the young horse earlier than this, but on the whole it is after the sale that the real schooling of the future would-be winner of the Derby commences. As with human beings, so with horses—and for that matter all animals—the effect of good or bad education is never eradicated. The fault most frequently found with racehorses is that they are disposed to be bad-tempered. Without allowing this for



From a Photo. by]

BREAKING IN THE YEARLING.

[W. A. Rook.



From a

IN THE TRAINER'S STRING.

(Photograph.

a moment, it can be emphatically stated that bad-tempered horses are seldom born, but often made by wrong treatment and careless breaking.

One of the first and most important of the horse's early lessons, after being shod and handled in the stable, is to learn to bear the bit. From this he proceeds to more active schooling, and has breaking tackle put on him, in which he is led about daily and "lunged" on a specially-selected soft piece of ground. This exercise removes much of the superfluous fat which has accumulated during the colt's lazy foal life. The next step is to accustom the youngster to the weight of a saddle. From this the pupil goes on to learn that he must bear the weight of a rider, who generally takes his first mount inside the stable. When the yearling gets used to a moving body on his back, he is led out into the yard or paddock and made to follow with others behind a steady old horse. This he will in most cases readily do, although sometimes lengthy trouble ensues; but firmness is exercised until it is fully understood that the rider is master. The initial training of the young racehorse is now nearly complete, for he speedily begins to understand what is required of him, and soon learns to walk, trot, or canter as may be desired.

From now his day's work begins to lengthen out, till from two to three hours are given to walking and trotting exercise, with perhaps a few short canters interspersed. These are gradually extended, until half a mile can be covered easily. Then the youngster joins the

main string, is schooled by an older horse, and may be said to be thoroughly "in training." His gallops are made faster, and he is sent for spins with tried horses, until the trainer is able to judge with fair accuracy whether the name of the aspirant is likely to be added to the "deed-roll of fame." If there is promise of future greatness the colt's career is watched with anxious interest by the man in whose care he has been placed. With much truth has it been written, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a trainer's crown." Sleepless nights are frequently his lot. While he sits on his hack, as the string gallop past, watching the future Derby candidate, misgivings often arise. Perhaps suspicions have been aroused as to the soundness of his charge. Possibly his employer has been over-critical, whilst the Press—that hungry monster which swallows and enlarges every item of news—has insinuated that his methods are not altogether above-board.

The first day of the New Year draws near, and at its birth the yearling becomes a two-year-old, and before many months have passed will make his first appearance on a racecourse. This is possibly at Ascot in June, but the form shown then and in the Middle Park Plate in October does not always truly forecast the future. It is as a three-year-old at the Newmarket First Spring Meeting in the Two Thousand Guineas that a more correct estimate can be made of the comparative merits of the future candidates for the Derby.



From a Photo. by

TAKING A HALF-SPEED GALLOP.

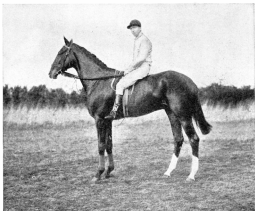
(W. A. Smith.)

Should the horse, whose history we are tracing, either pass the post first or show signs of speed, he is narrowly watched on the training ground, and gallops and trials are regularly reported in the sporting Press. Frequently this is just what the owner and trainer wish kept dark, and different schemes are devised to thwart the inquisitive tout. An amusing story is told of a prominent trainer, whose secrets from some source or another were continually leaking out. Suspecting a certain stable-lad, he let drop in the lad's hearing that the horse whose performances he wished to keep to himself would be tried against a certain other horse at an early hour next morning. As the trainer surmised, this information was duly conveyed to the right quarter. But the trap was set. In the early morning, before the named hour, another horse, whose legs had been whitened to resemble the stock-

inged legs of the Derby candidate, was sent to the arranged spot, and gave the watching tout an altogether wrong idea of the Derby candidate's powers. Whilst this was going on, the true trial was taking place elsewhere. Needless to say, the result of this trial was unknown to the tout, and the trainer lost a stable-lad.

But the eventful Wednesday draws near, and the owner's and trainer's anxieties are

gathered into a focus. The morning breaks, and the course is lined with a condensed, excited, and moving mass. The fateful hour is close at hand. Most of the candidates are in the paddock being saddled, and are, naturally, undergoing considerable criticism. As each is stripped the beautiful, shapely form shows up to perfection. The number-board indicates the runners, and then comes the preliminary parade. As the field parades



From a Photo. by

THE FINISHED ARTICLE.

(W. A. Smith.)



From a

GOING TO THE POST FOR THE DEER.

[Photograph.

past the stands and then canters to the post the eyes of all centre, first upon some particular favourite, and then move from one to another of the others. All the vast multitude is at a tension of excitement. The only cool and undisturbed persons present are the gaily-clad jockeys, whose looks of unconcern at such a supreme moment are to be envied.

much vexatious delay, the advance flagman signals a proper start, and "They're off!" is the cry, but not all exactly in line, though the ground so lost is speedily made good.

The great struggle has commenced. First one takes up the running, then another; but as the horses pass the City and Suburban starting-post the second favourite forges



From a

GETTING IN LINE FOR THE START.

[Photograph.

The post is reached at last, and the starter has his field at command—nearly. First one fidgety and almost unmanageable candidate will break away, then another, startled at a sudden noise, will leave the line. But, after

ahead, only to be challenged. He meets the effort bravely, and before entering the furzes proves himself capable of keeping at the head of affairs for the time, although only a bare gap separates him from another competitor



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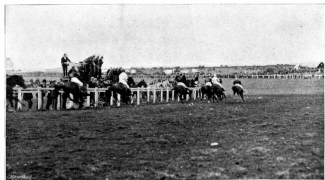
CLIMBING THE HILL.

[Photograph.

who has gradually crept nearer. At the mile post more than one has closed up, and there are now several in a bunch. At the top of the hill the leader has to give way, but in turn, at the descent, his successor is displaced, and half-way down the chestnut recovers his position. Tattenham Corner is rounded in a very short while, and then again there is an alteration in the order of running. A quarter of a mile from home several of the candidates seem to be in hopeless difficulty, and the issue resolves itself into a match between the first and second favourites. With rare patience the jockey of the former has waited his opportu-

nity. Inside the distance he sets his steed going in dead earnest, and a hundred yards from home obtains a real advantage over the chestnut, whose speed is almost exhausted, which is maintained until the finish, when he passes the judge's box a couple of lengths to the good. Shout after shout goes up, hats are thrown in the air, joy at the result is in the face of many, whilst disgust shows itself in others.

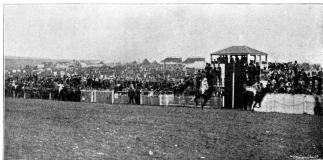
Meanwhile the proud, fortunate, and envied owner, who with the trainer has gone to meet his successful jockey, leads in the winner of the coveted "Blue Ribbon" amidst the ac-



[From a]

ROUND TATTENHAM CORNER.

[Photograph.



From a Photo. by]

THE FINISH OF THE DERBY.

[F. A. Beach.

clamations and congratulations of a host of friends and well-wishers.

The weighing-in inclosure is speedily reached, and the hero of the hour is unsaddled. The weight of his rider with the saddle is checked by the clerk of

the scales, who announces the expected—but none the less welcome—information that everything is in order, and the names of the winner, his owner, and jockey go to swell the long list of those who have won the Derby and immortal fame at the same moment.



From a Photo. by]

LEADING IN THE WINNER.

[F. A. Beach.

Wanted—a Bicycle.

By BERNARD CAPES.



HAD Mr. John Tremills dared to express an independent opinion upon anything in the wide world, rational dress for women would have been its *motif*. To all ordinary social questions he was a sensitive plant—a very mimosa of retiredness. He would subscribe to any fashion or condition the most abhorrent to his instincts, rather than run the risk of being cross-examined as to his objections. Thus, like all shy men, he was seldom true to himself; and, thus coerced by timidity, he was often driven to play a part, like a weeping monkey on an organ.

But he had one firm moral line of demarcation; and that was "rational dress." On this subject he could wax fluent and self-assertive, even until he would come to picture himself a very unassailable champion of the rights of man—a cause usually overcrowded by that of the wrongs of women.

"What is all this pother?" he would, for instance, cry to some intimate friend after fish and the second glass of sherry. "Skirts are the prerogative of women, not on any grounds of morality, but because for the most part women have knock-knees."

Mr. John Tremills favoured few of those higher exercises his independent position might permit him. He was neither "sporting" nor sportive; but he rode a pneumatic tyre, and did it well, too.

He lived in a low, embowered, old-fashioned house on Streatham Common, and thence it was a common custom with him to make long excursions by road to places of interest near or far, as whim suggested. Sometimes he would be away for a day or two at a time; and such trips he was in the habit of alluding to as holiday ones—as if his life were not all one extended holiday. But wealth salves its conscience with many such little misapplications of terms.

Now, one October afternoon Mr. Tremills was journeying homewards from Dorking, the glow of memory reflecting upon his face a certain smug happiness resulting from a convivial evening spent at the White Horse Inn in that town.

He had chanced to meet a most agreeable

companion at the coffee-room dinner table; and had slid into converse with him on a variety of subjects, the most enthralling of which had undoubtedly been rational dress for women. On this the stranger had had much to say, and to say after a rather tempestuous fashion.

"Hang the women!" he had remarked (he went as far as that). "Rational dress for a sex that doesn't understand reason! Great Scot! She prides herself upon her intuition. It'll all go with trousers—a house divided against itself. If she jumps to conclusions, she'll come a cropper. But I don't believe in the movement. It's a mere fashion. She's just riding a hobby-horse for the time—that's it, and virtually the skirt's over her legs still, and will ever be, for all the dummy shanks set astride of the saddle."

This was not polite, but it pleased Mr. Tremills, who felt very strongly in the matter. So he made up in his shy way to the stranger, and, later in the evening, lost fifteen shillings to him at billiards.

He would have liked to resume the conversation with him the next morning; but—so it appeared—he had already departed, and without paying his bill—an item of information retailed by the waitress which was like a cold douche to the sensitive gentleman.

"Bless you, sir," said the girl, "the fairer-spoke such rubbish is, the better to be on one's guard. We experience a many of them gentry in the inn business, and I never knew one of them but could have wheedled a lord justice out of his wig."

There seemed an allusion so pointed in this to his own timid credulity, that Mr. Tremills dropped the subject and ordered cold chicken and an omelette.

But, later in the day, on his journey homewards, the humour of the experience struck him, and he laughed to think how he had subscribed on moral grounds to the opinions of a swindler.

On a lonely stretch of road he was carolling in pure lightness of heart, when he became aware, with a bashful shock, that he had sped past a seated female figure, so hidden in the long grass and growth of the roadside that he had not observed until close upon it.



Tinglyingly conscious that his voice had risen at the moment into a jubilant caricature of itself—at the best a particularly tuneless organ—he was putting on speed to run from the embarrassment, when he was informed by a faint cry behind him that someone was hailing him to stop.

He slowed, looked round, and swung himself from his machine. It was the very figure he had passed that now stood up and beckoned to him with imploring action, it seemed, though full fifty yards separated them.

What should he do? He had all the instincts of knight errantry but self-confidence; and, lacking that, to what compromising situations might he not commit himself? Perhaps this was a sort of *Lamia*, who made it her business to waylay travellers with the ultimate object of blackmailing them. Perhaps she was a decoy, and had confederates hidden behind the hedge.

He stood still where he had alighted. The figure beckoned to him again—this time imperiously, he could see.

He bethought himself that at any rate he had his bicycle, and could flee at a moment's notice. He started slowly walking towards the figure; and at that it came out into the road and moved towards him.

Great heavens! What did he see? The creature was in rational bicycling dress!

He paused, and his brow went into one line of indignation. Also, his face fell very grave and rigid.

But when at last the figure approached him near enough for criticism, it gave him some embarrassed concern, in the midst of his wrath, to notice that it was that of a pale

young woman, who had evidently been violently crying.

She came slowly up to him, rubbing her wet eyes with a handkerchief, and he suffered some amelioration of contempt upon observing that she was a very well-formed young person indeed, and that her knees—so far as they were outlined—

were straight and a reasonable distance apart.

He caught himself away sharply, however, from this little sentimental concession; and only bowed stiffly and waited for her to speak.

This she seemed to find some difficulty in doing; whether from a discomfortable conviction that, judged apart from her bicycle—which was nowhere in evidence—she was an incongruous apparition, a sort of *des ex machines*—neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring; or that she yet swam in the back-water of tears, must be uncertain. But it remains to add that in the short interval of silence Mr. Tremills discovered himself wondering what was so essentially opposed to decency in a Zouave jacket—really a becoming garment in itself—in an Astrakhan cap, with a dainty quill stuck in its side, and in roomy pantaloons of a sombre hue.

He dared not look lower: it seemed taking ungentelemanly advantage of an accidental situation; but he straightened himself once more and coughed—and then the apparition spoke.

"I thought you would hurry when I called," she said, in a voice a little fretful but remarkably melodious.

"I came——" he was beginning, surprised; but she took him up at the word.

"You didn't. If you had, you might have caught him by now."

Evidently this was a young woman accustomed to dictate.

"I really didn't know what you wanted," said Mr. Tremills, lamely.

"Naturally," she replied, "unless you are a te—tedium or me—medium, or whatever the thing's called——"; and, to his consternation, she showed signs of crying again.

"Don't do that," he said, in great trepidation. "Please to tell me what's the matter."

He was interested in spite of himself.

There was a bloom on the young lady's cheeks, as if they had been rubbed with scarlet geranium petals, and there was undoubtedly something gratifying in being thus taken into the confidence, as it were, of so pathetic and engaging a stranger.

"I was resting by the roadside," she said, in a voice with an occasional moving catch in it, "when a man came along and rode off on my machine."

"Your machine?"

"He did, indeed; and a very presentable and good-looking young man, too. He just mounted it and rode off. I called and shrieked, but it was no good; and he got clear away. It was not a minute before you came up, and if you had hurried at once you might have caught him."

"But, my dear madam——"

"It wasn't kind of you, was it? And I have lost my bicycle in consequence."

"How could I possibly guess the cause of your trouble?"

"I didn't want you to guess. Is *any* appeal from a woman in distress a riddle to you?"

It was on the tip of Mr. Tremill's tongue to retort with "from a woman in trousers, you mean," but he had no heart for the sarcasm, even mentally; for he felt himself at once to be a timorous nincompoop without the excuse of a skirt.

"I am very sorry," he said, humbly, without further attempt to justify his laxity. "I will go now," and he actually made as if to remount his machine.

"Do you mean to go away and leave me to my fate?" said the pretty bloomer.

"Only to chase the thief," said Mr. Tremills.

"That is absurd, of course. You can't catch him now, possibly. He has twenty minutes' start of you."

"But you said——"

"Oh, please don't quote me against myself. It's natural to be wrong a minute or two when one is agitated. Besides, do you suppose he would have dared to venture it if he hadn't been an expert rider?"

"Well, I am a fair one, if I may say so."

He tingled with a shame-faced pleasure in prolonging the conversation, particularly as every moment lost lessened the chance of his being bidden to the pursuit, for which, indeed, he had small stomach. Commiserating the beautiful distressed was one thing; tackling a bloodthirsty rogue on her behalf, quite another.

Suddenly she backed from him, and fell to the most pathetic whimpering.

"Oh, what shall I do?" she moaned; "I can't walk the rest of the distance in this dress, and there isn't a station near."

Mr. Tremills hardened perceptibly.

"If you can ride in that dress," he said, grimly, "why can't you walk in it?"

"Oh! I should die of shame," she said.

He accepted this, for his conscience, as a compromise. Certainly, the girl was as pretty as a carnation, with just that wholesome touch of olive in her complexion which the sun works on a fair skin—like the heavenly salamander he is.

"Can I—can I be of any assistance?" he said, "in seeing you safely to your destination?"

"I live at Streatham," she answered, looking up with a pained brow.

Mr. Tremills glowed. Was an impish fate taking up the single strand of his destiny, and beginning to interweave it roguishly with another? The thought first frightened then exalted him. He had never seen any face quite so expressive as this one.

"Sweetest eyes, how sweet in flowings!" he murmured, entranced, to himself.

"I beg your pardon," said the young lady.

"Nothing," he answered, blushing. "I live at Streatham, too. It is quite a long distance to it yet; and you must really let me see you safely home."

"If you would," she said. "The company of your bicycle would make me look less of an absurdity."

So here was the explanation. The gentleman mounted the high horse (not his machine) at a leap.

"Perhaps you would like to ride it?" he said, with great asperity.

She went back a step or two, and her eyes opened at him.

"Oh!" she cried. "Go on, please! I would rather be alone."

He could have bitten his tongue in two. Were all his theories of the demoralizing effect of trousers so much windy prejudice? He really must judge the sex from a different standpoint of morality. Perhaps, after all, utility entered into its principles of emancipation as well as indelicacy—possibly without thought of the latter, even. He flushed to the very roots of his hair.

"Oh, do forgive me!" he cried, impulsively. "I'm not a cad, upon my word, I'm not. I only said it in a joke."

The young lady seemed to hesitate, look-

ing at him intently. Then a bright little twitch of a smile made her mouth desirable.

"Well," she said, "I think I'll trust myself to you. Shall we go on?"

His heart leaped and sang in his breast like a grasshopper. He walked by her side in an enchanted dream, giving no thought at

fingers together and looked up at him with an eager, woful, tear-stained expression of sorrow, the heart in his bosom melted in one explosion of sympathy—like a candle shot out of a pistol—and he swore, for him, a great oath.

"Don't be distressed!" he cried. "Was it of such importance? I'll get it back for you—I swear I will. I'll ransack the country



"SHE CAME SLOWLY UP TO REEL."

all to the sweet irony of circumstance that implied him an apostate to his creed.

"I hope you will recover your bicycle," he said. "Was it a new one?"

"Almost, and it suited me so well. I had saved up to buy it, and I sha'n't be able to afford another one for years."

Positively, to Mr. Tremills this seemed one of the most pathetic speeches he had ever heard. He cast about in his mind for any possible means of supplying the loss to her anonymously. As he reflected, she suddenly gave a gasp, stopped, and looked at him with horrified eyes.

"What's the matter?" he said, quite startled.

"Oh!" she murmured, in a strangled voice—"I had forgotten. The letter—the letter in the satchel!"

"Was there one there?"

"I wouldn't have it go astray for the world. What shall I do? Oh, what—what shall I do?"

She broke down again, sobbing, with her hands up to her face. He seemed, in a measure, to have the right to soothe and comfort her now, and he took some bashful advantage of it. But when she clasped her

—I'll leave no stone unturned. Your bicycle shall be restored to you."

She shook her head.

"It is hopeless. I feel that it is."

He would allow her no cause for unhappiness. Uplifted on the wings of ecstasy, he was jubilant and all flushed with self-confidence.

"You don't know my resources," he said, gaily. "You must elect me your champion in this cause. I am partly responsible for the calamity, you know. You said so."

"That was nonsense," she answered, quickly. "I was over-excited. But will you really try to get it back for me?"

He would have sworn it on the Bible. She caught a little of his confidence, and dried her eyes and walked by his side, talking to him fitfully in a gentle, low voice that fluttered the dove-cots of his sensibilities consumedly.

She was tired by the time they reached the outskirts of Streatham, and dragged her feet a little. But when they reached her home—a semi-detached villa in a park of new houses, and, comparatively, a poor shrine for such a divinity—she would insist upon his coming in to receive the thanks of her mother.

He protested faintly, and succumbed, of

course. He was already wilfully forging the links of his thralldom.

She ushered him into a pleasant drawing-room, and left him, with apologies, to seek her parent.

When alone, he noticed with pleasure that a certain delicate fancy was observable in the choice and arrangement of the furniture. He attributed all this to his breeched goddess; and thought, traitorously, "I leave it to sterner reactionists to pronounce her tasteless who is the queen of taste."

By-and-by a stout, placid woman slid into the room, along one oiled groove, as it seemed. She was quite expressionless, in a kindly way, and he felt no more fear of her than he would have of an Aunt Sally.

"My daughter tells me," said this newcomer, in comfortable, confidential tones, "that you have been most kind to her, Mr.——"

"My name is Tremills. I live not far away. I came across Miss—— Miss——"

She did not fill in the blank for him; and that for no reason but that she was a blank herself. It is the first principle of an imperturbable nature never to attempt to close one hole with another.

"I came across her," went on Mr. Tremills, blushing hotly and after an awkward—to him—pause, "in distress. Some scoundrel had stolen her machine. She was not—was not attired for walking, so——"

"You put her on your bicycle, I suppose, and wheeled her home? That was most kind."

The gentleman gasped.

"No," he said, stiffly; "Miss—Miss—Dash!" he exclaimed, desperately, for the woman wouldn't help him.

"Ah!" she said, pleasantly. "That's what they wrote in the old story books when they were hard up for a name."

"And that's just what I am, ma'am."

"Do you write stories? You are an author, then? I will sell you a good one—'Starkey Bunch.'"

Was the old lady touched? Mr. Tremills twittered and drew back. At that moment, however, his divinity walked into the room, transformed, clothed after the custom of her sex, a gracious and graceful Hebe.

"Janet," said her mother—(good; that was a point gained)—"thank Mr. Tremills for his kindness to you."

"I've done so, mother, of course. How can you be so ridiculous?"

She looked very kindly and a little rosily on her knight. He had tea with them, and

sat in a simmer of Souchong and enchantment all the time.

"She has appeared to me like Diana to Endymion," he thought, and we must accept his sudden infatuation as excuse for this somewhat startling parallel.

He was wise not to outstay his welcome. Sweet Janet accompanied him into the hall.

"May I come and report upon my success?" he asked.

"Oh, please."

Her brightness took a tone of extreme pathos.

"You don't know what it means to me to get that letter back. It is of far more importance than the machine."

"You shall have both, I hope. Now, how am I to know your bicycle if I come across it?"

"It is a 'Clinker,' and my name is stamped in ink under the flap of the saddle."

"And the name is——"

"Don't you know? Of course not—how stupid of me. Well, it is Janet Medway."

II.

MR. JOHN TREMILLS walked home on air. He was as one who had supped with the gods, and in whose veins the nectar that brings no headache richly courses. At that moment, it must be confessed, he was prepared to take oath that, not only had rational bicycling dress a complete *raison d'être*, but that any woman who flouted it was a frump, and any man who found suggestiveness in it a blackguard and a decadent.

This state of exaltation was for long very impervious to practical impressions; and it was not until a warning nip of indigestion, following a dinner somewhat hastily swallowed, and moistened with an extra ruddy toast or so to his divinity, brought him to earth, that he began at all to contemplate the nature of the task he had undertaken. Then—it is not to be wondered at—jubilation withdrew, and depression set in.

To find any particular bicycle in that stupendous service of iron and indiarubber that criss-crossed the whole round earth with tracks like the countless strands of a net! It was a thing beyond the compass of any but a clairvoyant or Saint Anthony.

Stay—a clairvoyant! There was something in the thought. Would it be possible to hire one and to put him on the scent? That might mean a long and costly business; and every minute was precious. No; the clairvoyant would not do.

He took another glass of wine, and drowned his brain in a deeper puddle of speculation. Till near midnight he struggled and fought for a solution—a plan. At last he fancied he saw his way out of the mess. He would compound a felony—would advertise, somewhat after the following fashion:—

"Will the gentleman who accidentally appropriated a lady's bicycle on the Carshalton Road, on such and such a date, kindly communicate with So-and-so? A substantial reward will be given, and no questions asked."

Fain to accept this forlorn inspiration as his only way out of the difficulty, Mr.

Tremills rose, shook himself, groaned, and after a brief interval went to bed. For an hour his weary head strove to piece puzzles that would by no means fit; then a delicious drowsiness over-cropt him, and his trouble melted into an ecstatic dream of love.

He woke suddenly, with the feeling that his sleeping heart had taken alarm at some intangible fear. A very faint, grey light was on the blind—that first essay of the coming dawn that is like the dying breath of night on a mirror, and that seems to men-

ace the watcher with unspeakable discoveries in its broadening.

He sat up in bed, breathing quickly, and presently was conscious—he could swear it—of a stealthy, unaccustomed sound somewhere within the dark-locked house.

In a moment panic had him by the throat—panic blind, unreasoning. He slid trembling to the floor and stood listening.

The sound had ceased on the instant—confirmation irrefragable.

He had always entertained an easy conviction that his house was destined for burglars to enter. All along the front were French windows footing it almost flush with the ground. But, after the fashion of human nature, he had grown accustomed to look upon himself as exempt from the perils that beset ordinary humankind. I have never met a man yet who did not consider his being summoned upon a jury an outrage upon his self-invested privacy.

By-and-by a desperate heat of manliness woke to quiet his shiverings. This was as it should be. To lasso and to drive one's own courage by the leg is to be really brave.

He kept a loaded revolver and a dark lantern in a cupboard in his room. These he fetched out, and softly striking a match kindled the latter. The very glow of the kindly round disc comforted him, as though it were a watchful eye fixed steadily upon his interests.

He would give himself no time for thought, but, in his nightshirt as he was, went swiftly to the door, opened it, and stepped out into the passage.

All was deathly still. It was obvious he must seek further for

solution of the mystery. With a great effort, he went from the open door of his bedroom—his ark of refuge, it seemed—and descended the stairs, actually sweating with terror at thought of what might be pursuing him softly from above while he was intent upon his front. I wonder, does ever the stalked burglar suffer one tithe of the agony his stalker does?

Mr. Tremills, however, came down unscathed, and put foot with a shudder on the cold oil-cloth of the hall.



"SHE LOOKED AT HIM WITH HORRIFIED EYES."

"I'm covering you," said a low voice in the hollow of the dark. "If you point your weapon, I fire."

The blood went back upon the poor gentleman's heart. He would have liked to drop down and die, and end all the fear there and then.

The silence of a long swoon seemed to succeed. Then he managed to quaver out, in quite a funny little falsetto: "Where are you? I can't see."

A faint trickle of laughter came back.

"I'm snug enough," murmured the voice. "Wish I could say the same for you."

"Are you going to shoot?"

"That depends. Will you put down your tool and come forward?"

"On what condition?"

"If you'll do it, honour bright, and give me your parole you won't take it up again, I'll not touch you."

Mr. Tremills stooped and laid his weapon on the stairs.

"All right," he said. "I give it."

"Now come forward a pace or two and stand," said the voice.

Mr. Tremills obeyed in horrible trepidation.

There was a rustle, the sputter of a match, and light leapt up in the hall from a gas-bracket. A moment the blaze blinded him; then he gave a gasp of utter astonishment.

A tall, gentlemanly young man faced him. His features were cut to an agreeable pattern; a faint smile hovered about the corners of his mouth. In his hand a long barrel gleamed.

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Tremills.

"Quite so," said the stranger, in a musical voice. "I decided to take you *en route*. Your description last night of the insecurity of your abode tempted me, I confess, out of my path. Still, I regret having disturbed you. It was unintentional, believe me."

"You are a—burglar, then?"

"A gentleman of fortune, sir. Are we not all, in our way? Does it surprise you?"

"No; I can't say it does, after my hearing that you had left the inn without paying your bill."

"A mere oversight, of course. I shall send the money by post."

He gave a smile of rich meaning. So pleasant and conversational was his manner, indeed, that his hearer's veins began to tingle with a warm glow of confidence; and he even felt a little shame over the inconsequent nature of his own attire as compared with the other's particular exterior.

"Did you walk from Dorking?" he said. He might have been greeting a long-expected guest.

"I walked," said the stranger, "part of the way. The rest—well, it was one of those happy chances that almost embarrass the favourites of Fortune—I rode on a bicycle. A lady I chanced across lent me hers, and—is anything the matter with you?"

The barrel in his hand was gleaming horizontally in the direction of Mr. Tremills's breast.

"No, no!" almost shrieked that gentleman. "I have given you my word. I'm not going to break it."

"But really—your household!"

"I'm only answerable to myself. I entertain friends, often enough and late enough. You needn't be afraid."

He danced, positively, on the chilly floor, and up to the smiling stranger. The latter was quite courteous, but excusably tickled by the entertainment afforded him.

"The bicycle!" clucked Mr. Tremills, gasping and subduing his voice all in one. "The bicycle! You stole it!"

"Tut, tut! A brutal misinterpretation of motive. Excuse me—really. I borrowed it, my good sir, for a few miles; only for a few miles. It has lain stabled all the evening near a Croydon tavern, while I played billiards. I must give you your revenge some day, by-the-bye."

"But—where did you find it? What was the lady like? Had it a name under the saddle?"

The stranger laughed outright, but softly.

"What is exciting you?" he murmured, pleasantly. "Upon my word, you ask more than I can answer. But the machine is outside at this moment. You can look for yourself, if you wish it."

"I do. If it is the one I hope it to be, I will buy it of you—buy it, and let you walk off here and now without the slightest further molestation."

The stranger laughed again.

"Well," he said, "you're a queer character. But I confess to a liking for you, and I'm not easily pleased. Call it done, then, at fifty pounds."

"For a bicycle!"

"Cheap," said the stranger, coolly, "under the circumstances"—and he a little ostentatiously swung the weapon in his hand.

"I'll give it!" said Mr. Tremills, hurriedly, "if it's the one I want. Will you bring it in here?" and he made for the hall door.

"Pardon me," said the kindly house-

breaker, intercepting him. "I don't think we'll affright the neighbourhood with the drawing of bolts. It lies amongst the shrubs on the lawn."

He took his self-constituted host by the hand, and led him courteously into the drawing-room. Here a ghostlier mist of dawn came through one of the French windows, the hasp of which, together with the shutter-bar, had been deftly manipulated by a practised hand.

"Please accompany me outside," said the stranger.

"But the wet grass—my bare feet!"

"Wait not to find thy slippers,

But come with thy naked feet;

We shall have to pass through the dewy grass——"

gurgled the polite man, with a little hiccough of merriment. "You must really come. Supposing I went alone, and you were to shut me out?"

"I won't, upon my honour."

"Honour amongst thieves, sir? You're compounding a felony. Come along!"

He had to go, conscious that he cut a sufficiently ridiculous figure.

"Oh, Janet!" he murmured to himself, as he hopped over the lawn; "what am I not suffering for your sweet sake!"

Perhaps it was a mistaken sacrifice; for woman is so sensitive to the ungraceful that, does a man save his heart's desire from drowning and appear before her draggled,

he is like enough to find that his snares have caught him nothing but a cold. But anyhow, Mr. Tremills had his present reward.

"A match!" he gasped. "Light one!" when the stranger had stooped into a particular shrub, and brought forth what they sought.

He tremblingly leaned down, pulled up the flap of the saddle, and, by the light of the little taper, held by the other, softly laughing, read thereunder the name he most desired to find. Then he rose with a breathing sigh of exultation.

"Is it the one?" asked the amused young man.

"It is."

"I congratulate you—and myself upon having been the humble means of procuring you such happiness. The machine is yours. Shall we go indoors and complete the transaction?"

Mr. Tremills nodded. Reverently he wheeled the machine over the grass, his eyes shining, the tails of his nightshirt playfully flapping in the morning breeze.

He deposited his treasure in a corner, and

—"Now," he said,

"if you will wait while

I fetch my keys, I will give you the draft."

"No foxing,"

said the stranger;

"or it will prove

a black draught

to you."

"Sir," said

Mr. Tremills,

with dignity,

"kindly learn to

credit with some

value my name

of gentleman."

"I do—on a

cheque," said

the young man.

Five minutes

later he held it

in his hand.

"Now," he

said, "I intend

to cash this the

moment the

bank opens. I

trust to your

'name of gentle-

man' not to molest

me in any way."

"You have had my

assurance, sir."

The other buttoned up the draft in an inner pocket. "Well," he said, "I must really be going. What an unconscionable time I've kept you. I can only repeat I didn't wish to disturb you in the first instance."

He laughed, walked towards the door, and came back again.



"IF YOU POINT YOUR WEAPON, I FIRE."

"By the way," he said, "you may as well have my pistol. Keep it as an example of the force of moral persuasion. It belongs to the machine, and is, in fact, nothing more harmful than an air-pump." And he laid the gleaming barrel on the table.

III.

MR. TREMILLS wheeled a lady's bicycle into the little front garden of the Medways' house, stood it up against a plinth of the steps leading to the door, and, mounting the latter, rang the bell and asked for Miss Medway. He was shown, somewhat to his embarrassment, straight into the drawing-room, where his divinity sat at afternoon tea with her mother and a very surly-looking young gentleman who appeared to be a visitor.

Miss Medway greeted him very graciously, and at this the surly young gentleman seemed to glower; and Mrs. Medway knocked over a tea-cup, but did not evince the slightest concern when she had done it.

"Nothing disturbs mamma," said mamma's daughter, ringing to have the pieces cleared away. "She would sit like that if the chimney were on fire and the wind blew the soot all over her face."

It was then that Mr. Tremills discovered that mamma cherished a creed of preordination, and had grown fat on letting things look after themselves.

"My dear," she said, "the cup was made for me to break. But it can be pieced again. Polytechnic cement will mend even a broken heart, I'm told."

"Fish glue's the thing," said the surly young gentleman, looking at Mr. Tremills as if he dared him to contradict him.

That innocent person unconsciously took up the challenge.

"It would melt in hot water, I expect," said he.

"I suppose I know what I'm talking about," said the surly young gentleman, whose name, it presently appeared, was Rooks.

"George," said Miss Medway, "if you can't be commonly polite, you'd better go."

Mr. Rooks rose from his seat at once. The process seemed like taking a boiling saucepan off the fire, for he went to a simmer and sat down again.

A pang of discomfiture passed for the first time through Mr. Tremills's heart. Who was this baleful youth with whom the young lady appeared so intimate? For all his natural self-depreciation, he had given no thought hitherto to the possible existence of

a rival. But—now he came to think of it—was it likely that a damsel of such obvious attractions would rest content with fewer than a score of knights in her train? It was even within bounds that the satchel—the return of which into her hands she so greatly desired—contained some letter of a tender or compromising nature.

On the thought his last rag of prudence flew to the winds. Jealousy—the sting behind the honey-bag of love, the bee—was sticking in his side, and already he felt the poison in his veins. Desperate to assure himself a foremost position amongst the imaginary stormers of that fair fortress, he jumped into the breach of silence following the last little assault, and, of course—shy man that he was—overshot his mark and fell into the hands of the enemy.

"Miss Medway," he said, blushing turning to that radiant creature, and most unblushingly giving the lie to his petest of theories, "may I presume to congratulate you on your courage in giving practical expression to a movement amongst your sex the wisdom of which no sane man can dispute?"

"I beg your pardon?" said the lady, looking considerably astonished.

"I allude—I mean," stammered Mr. Tremills, at once getting very hot and confused—"to trou— to rational dress."

Miss Medway said, "Oh!" and drew herself up immensely stiffly. Then she added, to his complete amazement: "You are quite mistaken. I utterly disapprove of it."

"But——" gasped Mr. Tremills.

"Oh! I know what you will say; that, because you saw me——"

"I consider the man," broke in Mr. Rooks, in a violent, squabbling voice, "a cad and a bounder who doesn't call it beastly!"

Miss Janet immediately turned her back on the irate young gentleman, and addressed a rather set face to her adorer.

"I feel," she said, "that some explanation is due in justice to myself. You found me in a complication of situations."

"They were provided for in the beginning," murmured Mrs. Medway in the background.

"Then, mamma, they were very badly provided for; for they turned out remarkably poor ones. The day before yesterday, Mr. Tremills, I rode over into the country to spend the night with an elderly lady—a friend of ours. It rained, and on the way I got soaked. My wet clothes were left by a careless servant too close to a roaring kitchen

fire during the night, and the next morning they were scorched all over and rendered quite useless. What was I to do? I was in despair. It was necessary for me to start on my return journey almost immediately: and my only way out of the difficulty was to borrow and ride home in the—the dress you saw, which belonged to, and had been left behind by, a rather lively niece of the lady, my hostess. The latter, by the way, was, I may mention, extremely stout. This explains my appearance. It is all a matter of taste, of course; and you are quite welcome to your opinion. But I confess that I never felt so ashamed in my life as when I was driven, in that garb, to appeal for help to a stranger."

"No explanation was necessary," began the unhappy Mr. Tremills, and choked before he could get further. How justly was he punished for that traitorous denial of his convictions. And here he had the misery, without possibility of relief, of appearing to champion a cause the condemnation of which from the lips of his beloved his whole heart indorsed.

He rose, after a few further commonplace remarks, with a sort of suspended awkward bow. His discomfiture seemed to make impossible all that prospective enthusiasm and gratitude that he had flattered himself was to be his rich reward when he came to make his gift of restoration.

Here, however, he was to be favoured beyond his expectation.

"I have to tell you," he said, in a depressed voice, "that I have been successful in finding your bicycle!"

Miss Medway rose, with a cry of real joy.

"You have found it! Oh, where?—how? I can't tell you how delighted I am."

He caught the thrill of excitement, and hoped again.

"It was a strange experience—too long to relate now. Anyhow, I discovered the thief and made him disgorge."

"Oh, how can I ever thank you enough? It was most kind

and clever of you. Is it intact? Where is it? I am wild to see it."

"I brought it with me. It is resting against the steps outside."

"Mamma! George!" cried Miss Medway, turning round radiantly. "Do you hear? Mr. Tremills has recovered my bicycle for me."

"I heard him," said the gloomy George, laconically.

"Thank Mr. Tremills, my dear," said Mrs. Medway.

"I've thanked him, of course. Do let me see it. It's outside, you say?"

All in a glow she ran into the hall; and Mr. Tremills and the surly young gentleman followed—the latter at a leisurely distance.

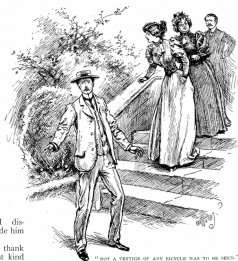
Janet threw open the front door and looked forth.

"Against the steps, did you say?" she asked.

"Yes. Why—what's become—? It must have fallen."

He leapt down the flight—turned and turned and stared about him with a blank face. Not a vestige of any bicycle was to be seen.

A servant who was sweeping the steps of



"NOT A VESTIGE OF ANY BICYCLE WAS TO BE SEEN."

the adjoining house looked over the party hedge and addressed him:—

"Is it the bicycle, sir? A young gentleman looked in and rode off on it just now."

"A young gentleman? What young gentleman? What was he like?"

"I'm sure I doesn't know," said the girl, with a coquettish wriggle. "He'd got curly hair and plenty of cheek, he had."

Mr. Tremills turned, and looked up at Miss Medway as she stood above him.

"It must have been the same scoundrel," he murmured, in a dismayed voice. "Miss Medway, how can I explain——"

"Not at all, I think. I was a little premature in my gratitude. But, please don't pick me out as the subject of your next practical joke."

Her eyes blazed at him.

"A reg'lar imposition and a stoopid one," said Mr. Rooks over her shoulder.

Mr. Tremills found his independence in one overpowering sense of intolerable wrong.

"You ungentlemanly fellow!" he said, hotly. "I'll convince you yet which is the better man."

At this the surly young gentleman laughed in a sardonic manner; and Mr. Tremills, bestowing a bow of comprehensive meaning upon Miss Medway, turned and strode away with all the proud expression of resentment he was master of.

IV.

STRUNG to the quick and half choking with grief, anger, and the consciousness of outraged sensibilities whose modest venturesomeness had not deserved so bitter a fate, the wretched gentleman wended his way homewards, the rankling virus of disappointment eating deeper into his heart at every step.

Reaching his house and entering the dining-room his eye was caught by the glitter on his desk of that fictitious weapon with which the confident burglar had for so long played with his timidity. He caught it up in a burst of sudden fury, and apostrophized the innocent tube somewhat after the heroic fashion of the twenties. But then he was moved beyond the capacities of ordinary language.

"Thou poor windy swaggerer!" he cried, in a grief-stricken voice, "who, boasting the power of death over life, canst compass nothing greater than the inflation of another as vacant as thyself with thine own empty vanity! Would that thou hadst, indeed, contained the death-dealing bullet, and that he—that dark haunter of the midnight—had—had let you off!"

In an access of rage he dashed the instrument violently on the floor.

"Great Scot!" he exclaimed.

The tube was smashed in its fall—piston and cylinder torn apart. From the hollow socket a twisted paper protruded.

He stooped, and drew it out. It was a letter in an envelope curled to fit into the aperture, and the superscription on its back was "Miss Medway."

Who had placed it there—the burglar or the lady? And was it the document so greatly desired by the latter?

For a moment, in his fever of resentment, the angry man allowed the unworthy and savage thought to dwell in him that here possibly lay the means of an ample revenge: that, by acquainting himself with the nature of the contents, he might acquire a hold over his beautiful victim that would presently satisfy his uttermost wrongs.

It was the depravity of an instant, of course. He was a gentleman, and a generous one; and by-and-by he put the letter intact into his pocket, and would blush hotly whenever he recalled that one-sided little wrestle with his conscience.

But at least he would be in no hurry to restore the paper. Miss Medway deserved no tender consideration at his hands; and she must just bide his convenience, and eat out her heart with waiting, if need was.

"She will find it very indigestible food," he would mutter, with a terribly tragic laugh, entirely devoid of humour; and would then fall into the pathetic mood over thought of how much he would like a bite himself.

For days he lived the life of a grumpy hermit, never going out of doors save into his own garden. But one exquisite morning, the ichor of life flowing sweetly in his veins, he felt he could live in a vexed seclusion no longer; and out he stalked on to the Common.

Now, he had moved not many hundreds of paces through a glowing September mist, when he spied the object of all his solicitude and unhappiness seated on a bench under a chestnut tree. Her air, as he approached, seemed a little weighted with sadness; but her complexion was beautiful as a Hebe's in the warm shadow of a leaf of asphodel.

He made up his mind at once to speak and get his mission over. He approached—his skin prickling, it seemed, under the lash of offended love—and raised his hat.

"Good morning, Miss Medway," he said, in a stiff, cold voice.

She gave a great jump, looked up, and flushed violently.

"Oh!" she said, "how you startled me!"

"I am sorry. I'm afraid I have been more than once an innocent cause of disturbance in you. Believe me, now as before, I have intruded myself only in your service."

"Won't you sit down?" she said, looking up at him with rather eager, shining eyes. "I want to speak to you."

She made room for him on the bench. He could not resist so tempting an offer; but he kept his spirits sternly on the defensive. She appeared to have some difficulty in beginning. At last she made the plunge, in a desperate, pathetic little voice.

"Mr. Tremills," she said; "you never gave us your address, you know."

"Didn't I? Now I think of it—no, I didn't, of course. But what—"

"I have only just discovered it, through a neighbour. If I had known it before, I should have written to thank you for your goodness and trouble in finding my bicycle for me again."

"But—"

"I know. It was all an abominable mistake. My cousin, Mr. Walter Harkaway, found it outside, and rode off on it for a joke. He returned it the same evening, and I rated him so roundly that he has hardly held up his head since."

She looked aside at her companion, timidly.

"What an atrocious, ungrateful wretch you must have thought me—and after all your kindness! I have been crying with remorse ever since."

Mr. Tremills turned with a full heart. He was melting; but he held on for another moment.

"You did me a wrong," he said. "But I forgive you for your poor opinion of me—that is to say, I forgive you, if you wish it."

"Oh, thank you—yes!"

"And you have your bicycle again?"

"I have it—yes."

He looked at her with ardent eyes. For all her gratitude there was a something wanting in the tone of it.

"You missed something?" he said.

"Yes. The letter was gone."

He put his hand in his pocket.

"Is this it?" he said.

She half rose—took the envelope from his hand, and sank back upon the bench.

"Mr. Tremills! How—oh! why are you so good to me?"

Mr. Tremills overflowed. The heavens seemed showering their benedictions on his head. When bashful men throw down their burdens of reserve, it is usually upon their own toes. They expand at inopportune moments, and their relapses are proportionally severe.

He stood up shaking all over.

"Let me tell you," he stammered. "Painful as it is to me—no, to you—as it may be, I mean—I adore you. I can't help it—I am in love all over."

The lady looked at him with steady, rather scared, eyes.

"Oh!" she breathed. "Is this a declaration?"

"Yes," he said, with passionate fervour. "The best I am capable of. No, please don't answer me in a hurry. Take time to think. I know it has been a short acquaintance; but, believe me—though I am far from wishing to extol myself—I—I am a bachelor of

considerable means, and I am not conscious of ever having done anything particularly wrong in my life."

Oh, misguided confession! Miss Medway permitted a little smile to disturb her gravity.

"That is very good of you," she murmured.

"Mr. Tremills, I am sorry—"

"No, no!"



"TAKE TIME TO THINK."

"I can't speak if you interrupt."

"I won't. I won't. You can't mean so. Tell me why."

"You have no right whatever to ask. But there is more than one obstacle."

"Perhaps they can be surmounted?"

"I fear not. There is one—let me see. Oh, of course! Your championship of rational dress would be a hopeless bar."

"It is all a mistake. I was accommodating myself, as I thought, to circumstances. As a matter of fact, I detest it."

"But that is not all. I—oh, Mr. Tremills! why should I try to mislead you? I am engaged already."

The world seemed to fall about the poor man's ears. He stepped back quite stunned and confused.

"To George?" he heard himself saying.

Miss Medway laughed outright.

"Oh, dear, no! To my cousin Walter."

"Who stole the bicycle?"

"Yes. And, Mr. Tremills, I want to ask a great, great favour of you."

"It is granted," he muttered, miserably, barely conscious of his words.

"You are generosity itself," she exclaimed, with real feeling, and, diving into her pocket, fetched out a slip of paper and offered it to him.

"Will you please take this back and destroy it?"

He accepted it half blindly—glanced dimly at it. It was his own draft for £50, payable to bearer.

"You are surprised?" she said, breathing quickly. "I ought to be—but I am afraid I know too well Mr. Harkaway's irrepressible love for joking."

"Mr. Harkaway!—the burglar!"

He was gathering from the wreck of his world a little light and a little increasing sense of dignity. Miss Medway looked down.

"I am bound to confess," she murmured, "that my cousin and the burglar are the same. It was a stupid jest, and a dangerous one; but he never calculates the chances when he sees the way to make fun out of a situation. He had always declared that, if he ever caught me wearing rational bicycling dress, he would do something to make me remember it. He passed me on the road that afternoon, as—as you know. I was picking flowers at the time, and he had mounted and ridden away on my machine before I even knew he was near."

"You remarked he was good-looking, I think?" said Mr. Tremills, in quite a self-contained voice.

"I judged so from the appearance of his back."

The young lady here spoke rather defiantly, as if she were conscious of a change in her companion's tone. Then she went on:—

"He rode my machine to his own home, left it there, and that same evening visited us. He heard of my misfortune, and actually had the face to commiserate me. He is a dreadful boy. He also heard of your visit and your offer. It now appears he knew you by name and where you live; but I never found that out till yesterday. That night—as he has since told me—he went to a card party—some horrid bachelor affair—positively rode my machine there—and on his way back passed your house. A servant-girl was slipping in at one of the French windows, which had been left unlocked for her own purposes, I presume. I would not venture to suggest anything against the creature, Mr. Tremills; but I should certainly advise your getting rid of her."

"No doubt," answered the gentleman, coolly; "and with a good deal of old-fashioned trust in my fellows with her."

"You must please yourself about that. But—where was I? Oh! what did that mad boy do, but run my bicycle into the garden, pitch it into a bush, and pursue the girl into the house. He had been making merry, no doubt; but I don't wish to excuse his conduct, which was outrageous."

"Oh, not at all! It was a joke, of course."

"Well, it was a poor one, I think. However, he caught the girl in the hall, laughing and struggling, and then they heard you stirring above. The creature scuttled to the kitchen, and my cousin out again through the French window. Here, all might have been well if he had only fled on his first impulse. But, as the demon of fortune would have it, the pump had tumbled out of my satchel—and only I know what it contained!—and the glitter of it caught his eye. In a moment the insane idea occurred to him that he would use this as a pistol, return, and face out the situation for the fun of the thing. He wanted to have a good laugh out of you, and at first only intended to frighten you and then explain who he was and all about the lost bicycle. But, when he came to see your face and the fright you were in of his pump, he couldn't for the life of him help playing the farce out to the end. It really *must* have been very comical."

"It was a piece of the most refined and delicious humour you could imagine."

"Yes, yes, and to drag you over the wet grass in your bare feet! It was too cruel of him! He confessed it all to me last night; and imagine what my feelings were when I discovered that my hidden letter remained in your possession! I could have died—I could, indeed. All night long I racked my brains for a way out of the difficulty. At last I determined to seek an interview with you (Walter had given me your address), to return you the cheque—which, of course, he hadn't cashed—and to throw myself upon your mercy and tell you all. Chance put in my way what I had not yet found the courage to seek. Unsolicited you returned me the contents of that wretched pump, and nobly and at once you gave me your word to destroy that equally wretched piece of paper. I ask you to forgive the poor boy, Mr. Tremills. His jokes are harmless and often really amusing; and he gives no thought to the possible consequences of his rashness."

"Madam!" said Mr. Tremills, with perfect calmness, "the night before the afternoon I had the misfortune—I really must say it—to come across you, I spent, in part, with your cousin at an inn in Dorking. It was there he became acquainted with my name and address—if, indeed, he did not, as you suggest, know both already by report. The next morning, so I heard, he left without paying his bill. I have his assurance that he intended forwarding the amount by post—"

"Certainly," broke in the young lady, hotly. "He told me about it. He has paid it since."

Mr. Tremills bowed.

"I am rejoiced to hear it; and also to understand that these exquisite jests, which entail so much apparent loss and suffering on others, are due, in effect, to nothing but the engaging playfulness of youth. I destroy this draft" (he tore the cheque deliberately into quite a hundred little pieces, and scattered them to the wind), "as you request. For the rest, permit me to congratulate you upon an alliance which seems to my unsophisticated mind to promise as perfect a union of sympathies and interests as it is possible, in this world of antagonistic propensities, to attain to."

Miss Medway blushed a very vivid scarlet.

"I mustn't read between the lines, I suppose?" she said, with a little forced laugh. "And, anyhow, it is another proof of your generosity to leave yourself out of the question."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Tremills, "I include myself in the congratulations most sincerely, I assure you."

He lifted his hat in a courtly manner, and walked off with an unmistakable appearance of relief.

L'ENVOI.

The postscript is the moral of the fable, as we all admit. To this I must add that the PPS. is the moral of the moral. Either, in the present instance, to any moderate student of human nature, is a foregone conclusion.

But for the benefit of the curious, I may mention that the first relates how, some eight or nine weeks after the above-recorded meeting of Mr. Tremills with Miss Medway, Mr. Walter Harkaway shipped himself, or was shipped, to a distant colony yclept Rhodesia, whither he made some rather ostentatious show of carrying a lacerated heart, which was more than once in danger of a premature healing on the voyage itself, and which eventually he submitted for treatment to a Miss Lottie Huggins, whose father did a brisk business with horses in the populous town of Johannesburg; and further, that the second records how, when Mr. Harkaway's wound was some months a forgotten scar, Miss Janet Medway was united in wedlock with Mr. John Tremills, a fact which any daily paper of the period will attest.

There is no PPPS. to inform the reader as to the nature of the relations that existed subsequently between a pair that scepticism would avow extremely ill-assorted; but this I *am* in a position to state—that it was not until she was some months a wife that Mrs. Tremills would consent to enlighten her husband as to the contents of the mysterious letter so jealously hidden away in her bicycle pump. Then, his persistent curiosity prevailing, she one day fetched and handed him the fateful epistle, and hid her fair face upon his shoulder while he read it.

And it was a note from a local boot-seller informing her that he was in receipt of her order for a pair of Pinet's Elevators, which he would procure and forward!

A short silence succeeded the reading; and Mrs. Tremills looked up askance to see her John's eyes fixed upon her roguishly.

"So you weren't tall enough?" he said.

"Not quite. What would you take me to be?"

"Just as high as my heart," said he; and that, anyhow, is a pretty ending.

Animal Actualities.

NOTE.—These articles consist of a series of perfectly authentic anecdotes of animal life, illustrated by Mr. J. A. Shepherd, an artist long a favourite with readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. While the stories themselves will be matters of fact, it must be understood that the artist will treat the subject with freedom and fancy, more with a view to an amusing commentary than to a mere representation of the occurrence.

XIII.



R. PIGGOTT had a dog, an Irish setter, which, notwithstanding its Hibernian name and pedigree, was born and brought up in London.

Jack was its name. Jack's ancestors in Ireland had been sheep-dogs for countless generations, but Jack himself knew nothing of sheep at all, beyond whatever acquaintanceship he might have had with an

occasional mutton-bone. Indeed, he had never as much as seen a live sheep in his life till the particular incident wherewith we are concerned took place. But heredity is a great thing, and in this case it manifested itself in a very noteworthy manner.

Jack's master gave him frequent exercise in walks. But Jack was young, and it so chanced that none of his walks had brought



HE KNEW THEM!



SHEPHERD, BUT DISAPPOINTED.

him within sight of a sheep, till one morning Mr. Piggott chose Hyde Park as the exercise-ground. One may often see sheep in Hyde Park, and on this particular morning it happened that a considerable flock disported itself at large about the grass adjoining the path Mr. Piggott chose. The flock was wholly unguarded, neither a man nor a dog having charge, and the sheep were making the most of their liberty. Jack stopped. What were these creatures? He had never seen such beings before—never, at least, in his present life. But he knew them well—more, he knew that something was wrong. Hundreds of generations of shepherd-ancestors in grassy Ireland had

learnt all about these woolly creatures, and the knowledge had passed on to this innocent, untaught descendant. Jack knew that they were foolish, weak things, these sheep now first set before his bodily eyes—things that must be lost without guidance; things, nevertheless, that it was important not to allow to be lost, and things which it was the duty of the superior creature, the dog, to take care of, to keep together, to drive in the path they should go, to terrify for their own good—even on extreme occasion to nip—lest they be scattered and lost entirely. And here they were, alone and uncared-for, with not a dog to look after them. Jack's ears lifted and his tail flourished



TROUT-FLIES AND HADDOCK.



DENTURELL.

intelligently. But Mr. Piggott interfered. He read the gaze, understood the cock of the ear, and interpreted the swing of the tail. He seized Jack quickly by the collar and took him along. The dog went submissively enough, but seriously disappointed. His master was resolved to have no trouble with those sheep, so kept a firm hold on Jack's collar for full half a mile, till the sheep were far behind, wholly out of sight, and, Mr. Piggott felt no doubt, altogether out of Jack's mind. Here a friend met Jack's master—an angling friend, and an enthusiast. When angling friends meet there is apt to be talk of an absorbing, technical, and mutually delightful character. Jack was released, and at the moment forgotten, and for a space all was trout-flies and hackle.

But while trout-flies and hackle hurtled through the quiet air, Jack had gone about his duty. The duty of every respectable dog, as ancestral remembrance whispered in his mind's ear, was to collect together all

scattered sheep and drive them home to his master. Jack left the neighbourhood of trout-flies and hackle at a swift bolt. He was gone but a few minutes, and his master knew nothing of his absence till a broken chorus of plaintive baa-aas disturbed the conversation. And there, kicking up the dust of the gravelly path, came an obedient and compact flock of sheep, driven, guarded, and kept from straggling with the true science of the perfect sheep-dog. And from behind the hurrying, bleating crowd beamed the joyous grin of Jack, happy in the honourable trade of his fathers! Not a sheep was missing, not one straggled. On they came, and only when the flock stood, a compact property, about the legs of the embarrassed debaters on trout-flies, did Jack stay the procession and gaze up in delighted expectancy for the approval of his master. For inherited instinct had triumphed, and Jack was a poet among sheep-dogs, born and not made.



A LITTLE HERDING.

Illustrated Interviews.

LXV.—MISS ELLEN BEACH YAW, "THE CALIFORNIAN LARK."

By M. DINORHEN GRIFFITH.



NEAR the city of "The Home of the Queen of the Angels," as the Spaniards named Los Angeles, California, stands a quaint, roomy, one-storied cottage, its broad piazzas wreathed with vines and brilliant flowers. It is called "The Lark's Nest," and, true to its name, it is jealously hidden from view,

roses in bloom at the same time—miniature lakes, fern shaded, and still more flowers of every kind and colour.

In the distance, fields of Calla lilies, orange groves, and orchards of luscious fruits.

The air is heavy with sweetness. Thousands of humming-birds dart hither and thither, or poise their jewelled bodies for an instant on some favoured flower; the mocking-birds



From a Photo. by]

MISS ELLEN BEACH YAW.

[Shelby, Los Angeles.

and even from the too intrusive sun, amid stately palms and rare tropical trees. Its shady grounds are encircled with high hedges of vivid scarlet geraniums *vis-à-vis* with equally high hedges of white marguerites that gracefully bend their long necks to every wanton breeze; and adorned with a hundred and fifty different kinds of roses—one exquisite variety, the "Gold of Ophir," which stands near the cottage, has a record of 10,000

bold noisy *séances* in the trees, and bees and birds hum and sing all day long from the mere joy of living.

This eternal summer-house in the world's flower-garden is the home-nest of a singing-bird of rare quality that migrated to England last year, and is well known as the "Californian Lark," and the possessor of the highest soprano voice in the world.

Miss Yaw must have learnt singing from

the birds in her Californian home, for she sings as they do, without an apparent effort. She has a compass of nearly four octaves, her lower and medium notes having the rich quality of a mezzo-soprano, while the high, and very high, notes are sweet, pure, and clear as a bell.

"I never heard such a bird-like voice; it is almost beyond human comprehension," said one critic. And so it was. The young artist reached F sharp in *altissimo* with perfect ease, and down the two chromatic scales, each note being of faultless purity and given with a precision and crispness that was nothing short of marvellous.

Tall, fair, *svelte*, with a dainty, flower-like face, and endowed with one of woman's greatest charms—a low, sweet-speaking voice—that is the best description I can give of the Californian Soprano.

"Were you born in California?" I asked, one day.

"No; in New York State; but I was very young when we went to live at Los Angeles.

"At what age did I begin to sing? Oh, I think when I was ever such a wee mite! My mother was very musical, and was my first teacher. She often told me it was difficult to get me to practise, but that I would sit for hours at the piano improvising tunes to the nursery rhymes I knew by heart."

At the age of six little Ellen attended a singing-school, being one among



MISS YAW (AGE 17).
From a Photo. by Bishop Bros., Minneapolis.

about a hundred pupils of both sexes; they were taught in class. The master was struck with the voice of the little maiden, which for quality and clearness was easily distinguishable from the rest, and he told her to come up on the platform and sing the solos, and the others would join in the chorus. At this time she could not read, and could only remember the first verse, so the master had to prompt her.

After the lesson was over, she was asked if she would like to sing at a concert, and with

the permission of her parents she agreed to do so.

"Where did you make your first public appearance?"

"At Buffalo, New York. Perhaps you would like to know what I wore?" she asked, smilingly.

"I am sure the public would."

"Well, a little striped calico frock and a big print sun-bonnet, and my song was 'Away Down in Maine.' I was almost frightened at the noise the people made; they clapped me, and made me sing it again and again. After that I sang at many concerts.

"My mother still continued to teach me up to the age of fourteen; then I had lessons from an old Italian professor. When I was sixteen, I went to Boston to study, but only stayed there three months. I must explain," she added, "I am the youngest



MISS YAW.
From a Photo. by Harrison, Los Angeles.



IN OPERA.
From a Photo. by Morrison, Chicago.

of the family, and my father had lost all his money, and died when I was quite a child. So I was very poor, and could only afford to take quite a few lessons at a time. Then I had to sing so as to make enough money to pay for the next course, and so on.

"My next teacher, and one to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude, was Mme. Theodore Bjorksten, a Swede living in New York. She was very interested in me, and I took lessons with her off and on for two years."

The next important incident in Miss Yaw's life was a trip to Paris with Mme. Bjorksten, and she took advantage of her four months' stay there to have a few more lessons from Delle Sedie and the late M. Bax, after which she returned to California to a course of hard work. She

made up a concert party and toured through the States for two winters, each tour lasting six months.

She was received with the greatest enthusiasm everywhere. In Denver she received a perfect ovation. At a concert there she gave, as an encore, "My Old Kentucky Home," with such pathos, that after the first few bars many of the audience were in tears. This was followed by a gay French *chanson*. Her last song, the "Swiss Echo Song"—the call of the Swiss mountain-girl re-echoing from the heights—was rendered so faintly and so sweetly, that it recalled Du Maurier's description of Trilby's last song, when she used just "the cream of her voice."

"Have you met with any adventures or startling experiences?"

"On one occasion it was said I was fortunate enough to have saved hundreds of people from an awful death by a little presence of



AT HOME.
From a Photo. by J. A. Lerren, Los Angeles.

mind. I was engaged to sing at a place in Texas; it was a cotton exhibition, and a series of concerts was given every evening.

"As I entered the huge hall I heard cries from the audience, and someone called 'Fire!' I rushed on the stage just as I was, in my cloak, and, holding out my hand to

paper, and as soon as I was comfortably settled, I took it up to read.

"I must say that I had somewhat of a shock when I read that 'Miss Ellen Bench Yaw, the Californian Lark, while singing in grand opera in New York, burst a blood-vessel and died on the stage,' but, best of all,



From a Photo. by]

MISS YAW, WITH HER DOG "KEATS."

[L. J. LOVING, Los Angeles.

gain attention, I sang the first few bars of 'Lakme.' Almost at once the audience calmed down, and I sang it right through. I thought myself I never sang better—I felt inspired. There was actually a fire, but it was quickly extinguished, before the audience knew that it was a reality, and not a false alarm, and the concert was continued.

"It is not given to many to read their own obituary notices and the manner of their death," said Miss Yaw, "but that once happened to me. I was on tour with my company, and had to take a train from near Salt Lake City. We got into a sleeping-car; on one of the seats I saw a Chicago daily

it added that 'her last few notes were like those of a swan.' My mother," added Miss Yaw, "received hundreds of letters of condolence, but she knew that I was far enough away from New York, so was more shocked than alarmed."

"And your life and amusements at your home in Los Angeles?"

"Oh, very simple. We are five miles distant from the city of Los Angeles, almost at the foot of the Rockies.

"I am out of doors all day. I go home to rest; so I lie in my hammock or on the veranda, always guarded by my dear and beautiful dog friend, 'Keats.'

"Sometimes I go to the grove to pick oranges of our own growing—or to the orchard for fruit; but my favourite occupation is gathering and arranging flowers. I retire to rest at the primitive hour of nine, but am always up early—with the birds, in fact."

"The wheels of your domestic affairs must roll more smoothly with you than they do in England, to give you the leisure to rest."

"Oh, yes, they do! All our servants are Chinese and Japanese; they are very good, and easy to manage: splendid workers if—there is an 'if' here also—you let them have their own way. All our vegetables and fish are hawked by Chinese, and they are sometimes most amusing."

"What recreations or social pleasure do you indulge in?"

"Picnics chiefly, and afternoon informal calls; sometimes we make up parties and visit the North American Indians; their encampment is only a night's railway journey from our place. I greatly enjoy these trips, for they are a most interesting people."

Miss Yaw showed me some little snap-shot photographs of groups of boys taken in her grounds. "These boys," she said, "used often to come and spend the day with me; they are from the 'Lark Ellen Home' for News Boys at Los Angeles."

"No, it was not founded by me. Do you see that gentleman at the back, holding up a little 'darkie'? That is the founder—General Otis, once a near neighbour of ours, now Commander of the American Forces at Manila."

"The Home was called after me, for I often gave my services as well as monetary contributions, and still do all I can towards its support. I am very much interested in

the scheme, for I think it is doing a great deal of good in keeping the boys from the streets. The Home provides board and lodging for a hundred boys—Americans and negroes—for the nominal sum of fourpence a day each.

"It is my ambition to one day be able to educate a few street boys and give them a chance in life. Many of them are such bright and intelligent little fellows."

"What about your second visit to Europe?"

"Well, I spent a summer on the Rhine, and then coached under Randegger for my next season's tour in America. I was not allowed to sing in England, as I was under a contract with an American manager."

"In the winter of 1897 I again visited Paris, and studied for opera under Geraudet. The director of the opera paid me a great compliment, comparing my voice to that of Christine Nilsson. I sang at one or two concerts in Paris, and received an offer to join an opera company at Nice."

"But the most important and, I think, happy moment of my

life was when I first appeared before a London audience. I am, I think, the only artiste who had made a name in America without having first appeared in London."

"What are your favourite songs?"

"I am very fond of Ambrose Thomas's version of Ophelia's Mad Scene, Alabiéff's 'Russian Nightingale,' Auber's 'Laughing Song,' and, well—I have many favourites; and I love also all the old-fashioned songs: Scotch, Irish, and American negro melodies; they are so very plaintive and sweet."

"Are you satisfied with your reception here?"

"Yes, indeed; everyone has been so kind, and I have done so little. I have been



MISS YAW, GENERAL OTIS, AND BOYS OF THE LARK ELLEN HOME.
From a Photograph.

recalled two and three times in nearly all the places I have sung this winter.

"You asked me what music I liked best! My choice you will think strange: the croaking of the frogs, with the chirping accompaniment of the cricket. I cannot say why I like it, but it certainly appeals to me more than anything else. My Danish hound, 'Keats,' shares this as well as several

winter engagements in England. I can be home in twelve days after leaving England.

"What route? Oh, I always prefer the Santa Fé Railway from Chicago; it is a perfect system, and the route is most picturesque."

Miss Yaw, in addition to being the possessor of a voice as lovely as it is rare, is also a great artist. What Nature gave



From a Photo. by

IN THE GROUNDS AT HOME.

(J. A. Laramie, Los Angeles.

other of my fancies, and together, on a moonlight evening at home, we stroll down a path leading to a vineyard at the foot of the mountains, on purpose to listen to the Frog Choir.

"I am going to spend a few months this summer at home, to rest and prepare for my

her, she has improved and perfected. Her personality is most winning, yet she is as simple, and I might say almost as diffident, off the stage as if she were a little maiden fresh from a convent. She looks upon her voice as a talent intrusted to her by which she may do good to others.

The Good That Came of It!

By ANNIE O. THIBBS.



EXTREME country in the depths of winter is not exactly cheerful, and Mary Holt was beginning to find that the cottage which she had furnished so gaily in the summer and hung with roses (which obstinately refused to clamber) was becoming a bit of a white elephant. The fact that it was hers, that the chairs and tables were hers, and that the servant was her own undisputed possession, did not counteract the gloom and silence that seemed to settle down upon the country in the winter. Even the oak paneling, warranted to be no less than 250 years old, and in which she had once taken such inordinate pride, began to look chill and gloomy as the days drew in and the light began to fade; and Mary found herself wishing that something would happen to break the deadly monotony—even if it was only Aunt Tabitha with a bilious attack or Cousin Rebecca with an influenza cold. She felt that she would go and nurse either of them cheerfully if they would only be obliging enough to want her. But neither of them did, and Mary's pride obstinately refused to allow her to go to them without an invitation.

They felt, no doubt, that a woman who could live on the wilds of a common, with only a female servant to protect her, was unmaidenly in the extreme, and that such uncalled-for independence required frigid indifference to bring it to its senses. They therefore neglected her, and, in the summer, when the burning days were full of scents and sounds and colour—the hum of insects, the song of birds, and the drowsy voices of the haymakers over the hedge—Mary had been thankful that they had left her alone. As a matter of fact, she had been rather dreading their visit to her cottage, but, so far, their outraged feelings had apparently prevented it, and they had not even troubled to inquire after the “mess” which they had prophesied Mary would make when she set up housekeeping for herself.

Before a fever of independence and burning ambition to do something in the world had seized her, she had lived a humdrum existence with this aunt and cousin in a select quarter of Brixton. After her father's death they had “done their best for her,” which “best” meant residence in their “commodious villa,” a starvation diet, and a

careful and systematic snubbing, or, as her aunt called it, “training,” in return for which Mary paid them an extortionate sum from her small allowance, and performed various little acts of kindness, such as darning stockings, mending table-cloths, and dusting out the drawing-room, which, her aunt was careful to explain, would be useful to her in after life.

For a year or two Mary submitted meekly to all these demands; but when she came of age—that is to say, reached the demure age of twenty-five, and came into the undisputed possession of £200 a year—she determined to try an experiment for herself. She felt that she was no longer a schoolgirl to be snubbed and scolded, but a woman of means and—she vaguely suspected—of brains. Certainly she had a very fair talent for painting, and, with money, the ambition which had withered away under her aunt's severe “training” began to reassert itself, and once and for all she determined to do something for her art before the Brixton air got into her veins and froze her blood.

Already she felt that it was doing so. Already she felt herself acquiring certain little habits of starched primness—found herself worried by specks of dust and agitated about finger-marks; and she began to wonder disconsolately how long it would take to petrify her into an exact copy of Cousin Rebecca. The very thought of it horrified her, and one sober November afternoon, when Brixton looked uglier than usual, she made a sudden plunge and went house-hunting. The result was that six months later, after stormy scenes between herself and her aunt, and after many gloomy prophecies of the calamities which would overtake her, she found herself installed in a quaint old cottage on the outskirts of a common, and there she settled down to work.

She had every encouragement. A long, light studio ran down one side of the house, with heavy curtains at the doors and windows to keep out draughts and noises; with a big bookcase filled with books at one end, and a huge table covered with any quantity of paints and canvas at the other. But, somehow, when winter came on, Mary had not much to show. The garden seemed to have taken up all her time, and now that the last of the chrysanthemums were in bloom and the days were growing short and dark, it had

ceased to be interesting. There was plainly nothing to do. She looked with a sigh at a solitary cabbage that seemed bent on defying the winter, and began to feel aimless. Winter, she decided, was wretched and horrible, and on the edge of the common there was absolutely nothing to relieve it. It was no use looking out of the window, for there was nothing to see except a ragged hedge and an empty road, and she found herself driven back on her little cottage, which, somehow, seemed suddenly cheerless and unhomelike.

It was, too, so horribly quiet and lonely at night. Her nearest neighbours were nearly half a mile away, and when Emma had drawn the curtains and locked the doors and retired to the kitchen, Mary felt herself somehow shut out of the world and neglected. She began to feel as if she was growing old. She looked, indeed, older than she really was, and with the winter her spirits sank, the colour ebbed from her face, and she seemed to be rapidly freezing up into a veritable old maid.

Just then, however, something happened—something at once extraordinary and exciting, something which unhinged her life and turned the gloomy common into a centre of romance.

It was nearly seven o'clock. Emma had put a log on the fire and taken away the tea-things, and Mary had settled down with a book in an easy chair. She had refused to have the lamp turned up for a moment, for the semi-darkness, with the long flames shooting out flickering shadows across the room, was pleasant, and she lay back idly in her chair and watched it. She was getting drowsy, and in a few moments would probably have been asleep, but suddenly, in the midst of the silence, there came the sharp sound of horses' hoofs on the hard frosty road outside, and then, almost before she had realized that there was such a thing as a person abroad on that dreary night, a bullet whizzed through the window, scattering the glass in broken fragments to the

floor, and plunging into the cushion on a chair at her side.

If she had been sitting in the chair she would have been shot! For the moment the thought dazed her. Then she started up frightened and bewildered, but even as she did so a second shot rang out through the clear night air, followed by the hoarse, broken cry of a man.

Mary darted from the room. Outside, Emma was stumbling along the passage armed with a rolling-pin—evidently the first weapon that came to her hands—and she stared at her mistress as if she was rather surprised at seeing her alive.

"What's ever it is, ma'am?" she exclaimed. Then, getting no reply, and evidently anticipating the worst from Mary's breathless attitude, she burst into violent sobbing.

"Oh, mum, we shall both be killed, we shall, and my young man, oh, whatever shall I do?"

Mary, with sudden energy and thoughtless courage born of her confusion, commenced unlocking the door.

"We must see what it is," she said, breathlessly; "it's no use being foolish. Go and let Con loose." "Con" was short for Confucius Brutus—a dog.

Emma obeyed in fear and trembling, and, with an outward and visible show of bravery which she was far from feeling, Mary abruptly and recklessly flung open the hall door.

"Who goes there?" she cried, in a voice which she felt was slightly weak; "who goes there? Speak, or I fire."

She reflected an instant later that that was a reckless thing to threaten, and she immediately altered it to "let the dog loose" on whoever it was who lurked behind the hedge.

However, she got no reply, and the silence



"A BULLET WHIZZED THROUGH THE WINDOW."

was terrifying. There was not a sound to be heard, not a thing to be seen, for it was a dark night and slightly foggy, and she peered across to the road in vain. It seemed almost as if the shots had been fired by some ghostly hand, and she shivered at the thought. She was relieved an instant later to hear the short, sharp barks of Confucius, and many mutterings and exclamations from Emma as she unloosed him amidst, apparently, effusive greetings. He rushed away to Mary and commenced his war-like proceedings by jumping up and licking her on the face; then, being sharply rebuked, wagged his tail in hard thumps against the door, and immediately disappeared.

Mary and the girl, peering into the darkness, waited breathlessly for something to happen. Mary was beginning to tremble now, and Emma, already fearing that her end had come, shook with suppressed sobs. They waited in silence, hearing nothing, feeling nothing but the fog at their throats and the mystery of the night at their hearts, and then, suddenly, Confucius whined, and Emma grasped her mistress's arm.

"There!" she said, hoarsely.

"He's found something," cried Mary, excitedly. "Oh, good gracious! Con, Con!"

She called him without result. They could hear him whining, every now and then uttering short, sharp snaps, and then suddenly he began barking violently at something under the hedge. The next minute he came tearing back up the path, frightening Emma into a violent exclamation and a belief that they were as good as dead, and began whining and dancing round Mary, pulling at her dress, hurrying backwards and forwards with the evident intention of persuading her to follow him.

Mary bade him be quiet, and listened intently. There was nothing to be heard. The stillness was the stillness of the winter, and there was not so much as the cracking of a twig. Mary could hear her own heart beating in the darkness, and then after a moment's doubt and hesitation, aggravated by Emma's repeated assurances that she was going to her death, she ventured down the steps and on to the gravel path. There she stood trembling.

"Give me the poker, Emma," she said, at last; "I don't think it's anything particular, but——"

The pause was impressive, and Emma's teeth began to chatter audibly. Mary waited for the poker, and, while the girl was gone,

shrank back nervously to the step, while Confucius, regardless of the dignity of his namesake, rushed madly backwards and forwards.

"Oh, miss," said Emma, when she came back. "It's a sin to go and risk yer life, and if you're murdered, miss——"

"Hush!" said Mary, nervously. "I'm not going to be murdered."

Emma looked doubtful, and immediately retreated behind the door, with her fingers in her ears to prevent her mistress's death scream reaching them.

Meanwhile Mary advanced down the path to the gate brandishing her poker, and inquiring every now and then in a conciliatory voice (for she was getting decidedly nervous) who was there. Receiving no reply except the exultant barking of the dog, she began to feel that politeness was useless.

"What is it, Con?" she cried, energetically, "what is it? Fetch it out, then—Go for it, good dog!"

The good dog, however, did nothing of the sort, but continued to dash up and down in a state of frantic excitement.

"I don't believe there's anything at all," said Mary to herself. Then she remembered the bullet buried in her cushion, and shuddered. With an effort she went slowly forward into the road. As she did so her foot suddenly struck against something hard, and she started back with a scream. Emma, behind the door, hearing it, screamed too; and Mary, recollecting herself, stooped down and picked the thing up.

At first when she had it in her hand she scarcely realized what it was. Then she became aware that it was a man's hard bowler hat, and she felt a little thrill of horror seize her. With a nervous grip to her poker, she crept quickly along the hedge, straining her eyes in the darkness, shivering, until she suddenly came upon a dark object, at which Confucius sniffed eagerly. She dropped the poker, and stooped down. The next instant she had started up again, for it was the body of a man she found, and was calling wildly to Emma to bring a light. She waited until it came, looking into the hedge in an agony of apprehension. She was almost relieved when the candle flashed along the ground and found only a young man in evening dress lying on his face. To her sudden horror, however, he appeared to be dead; but when she lifted his head and listened she fancied that he still breathed.

"What shall we do?" she asked the now open-mouthed Emma. "Do you think

we could drag him into the house between us?"

Emma sniffed.

"A man," she said, contemptuously. "I never did such a thing in me life, mum."

"No, of course not," said Mary, hurriedly; "but the poor fellow's hurt, and we must do what we can for him. He's been shot, I think, and—oh!—who can have done it?"

Emma, not seeing what she saw, wagged her head wisely.

"You mark my



"A YOUNG MAN IN EVENING DRESS LYING ON HIS FACE."

words, ma'am," she said, after a moment's impressive silence, "some bad'll come of it!"

Mary was trying to move the man into a more convenient position, and, as she did so, the fluttering light of the candle flashed up spasmodically into his face. It was a young face—a young face with marks of dissipation scored upon it which Mary's innocent eyes did not understand, with a mass of brown hair waving back from a square forehead, a straight nose, and a brown moustache covering a firm mouth.

Mary looked at him with awakened interest.

"He looks quite a nice young man," she thought, and she saw only the pitiful whiteness of his face.

"Now, Emma, come along," she said, aloud. "Come and help me to lift his shoulders. We must drag him in somehow, for it would be downright wicked—Oh, never mind the light," as the girl raised objections; "put it down in the middle of the road."

Emma obeyed, reluctantly.

"I don't see as it's my place to move

strange gents," she began, "as 'appen to lie in the roadway——"

"Oh, Emma, don't be absurd," Mary interrupted, seizing his shoulders. "Don't you see that the poor fellow's shot, and that he'll bleed to death if we leave him here? Come and help this minute."

Emma pursed her lips and looked down suspiciously. At that instant the man stirred slightly and groaned, and Mary, to her intense dismay, started and dropped him abruptly to the ground.

"Oh," she began, nervously, "I am so sorry——"

Then she saw that he had fainted again, and a sudden feeling of helplessness and terror swept down upon her.

"Oh, what shall we do?" she cried,

impetuously. "He might *die*! Good heavens, what shall we do?"

Emma stated with emphasis that he was only "taking on." When, however, Mary held the candle to his face and Emma saw an ugly patch of red blood discolouring his white shirt, her suspicions immediately changed to a peculiar interest. She felt that a royal, first-class, Adelphi melodrama had come to her door, and she had a strong desire to see it out.

"Oh, lor, ma'am," she said, in tones of awe, "'e ought to be got in at onst."

She stooped down with willing energy to take a shoulder while Mary took the other, and Confucius, having returned from an interesting rabbit hunt in an adjoining meadow, began to bark frantically.

They managed to drag him, inch by inch, and little by little, up the pathway to the house, and there with great difficulty got him into the studio. Having accomplished this much they sat down breathlessly to look at him. What they saw evidently confirmed Emma in her suspicions, for she sniffed disdainfully.

"I said 'e was a vill'in," she remarked, as



"THEY MANAGED TO DRAG HIM, INCH BY INCH, UP THE PATHWAY."

if his wickedness was an undoubted fact. "He didn't get wounded like that for nothink—there'll bad come of it, miss."

She went off into an ecstasy of excited prophecy, which Mary interrupted in the middle by a request for some hot water. She thereupon got up and marched to the kitchen, where she belaboured the pots and pans with such emphasis that Confucius, thinking it was rats, darted wildly after her.

"What're we goin' to do with him?" Emma asked, when she returned, bearing a steaming kettle. "I never 'eard o' the likes—a-harbourin' a murderer, p'r'aps."

"We must get a doctor first," said Mary, calmly. She had managed to get off the man's coat, and had found a wound in his shoulder from which the blood was oozing rapidly.

Emma stared at her in terrified reproach.

"Wot, me?" she cried. "Me goin' all over that lonely road by meself at dead o' night?"

"Well, then, I'll go," said Mary. But the suggestion only seemed to increase Emma's agony.

"Wot, an' leave me 'ere in the 'ouse with a corpse?" she screamed.

"Oh, Emma," said Mary, horrified at her unfeeling remark. "There won't be a corpse, and besides you can have Con. One of us must certainly go, and one of us must stay and attend to this. I don't know how to bind it up, and to keep bathing it is the

only thing we can do. You had better stay and do it, and I'll go and fetch the doctor. I can get there in ten minutes on my bicycle."

After some reluctance Emma consented, and Mary disappeared. As she got out her bicycle and wheeled it into the road she reflected that it was rather a quixotic thing to do, and that she might, as Emma said, be harbouring some awful individual—a thief, a lunatic, or a murderer even. She remembered the shots she had heard and shuddered. Supposing he was a murderer? Suppose there was another man lying out

somewhere on the cold, frozen road?

The thought was such a shock to her nerves that when she reached the doctor's house she asked for herself, and, the house-keeper having mentioned that she thought Miss Holt was wandering in her mind, the doctor came out in some astonishment. When he saw her and heard of the accident—or tragedy, or whatever it might turn out to be—his astonishment deepened into horror, and he hurriedly prepared to ride back with her. When they reached the cottage, they found Emma seated at a discreet distance from the stranger, while he, with one hand on the head of Confucius, asked inconsequent questions concerning his whereabouts. Directly Emma caught sight of them she started up.

"He's mad," she cried, regardless of his feelings, "and 'e thinks as I'm 'is aunt an' as 'e's goin' to marry me an' all sorts of things."

Mary looked surprised, and the doctor, with a sudden glance at the young man's half-unconscious face, went hurriedly forward.

"Why, it's young St. Hill," he cried. "St. Hill—Hugh! Don't you know me?"

The young man opened his eyes.

"Oh, the deuce!" he said, faintly. But before anyone could exactly determine whether that was a conscious or unconscious remark he had wandered off into other subjects, and was addressing Confucius as "Tom," greatly to that dog's confusion.

II.

AFTERWARDS, when Mary was in bed and thinking calmly over the night's events, she began to wonder what had prompted her to act in such a reckless, not to say foolhardy, fashion.

Then the serious side of the affair came uppermost, and she lay thinking of it, wondering who had fired the shots and why—who and what young St. Hill was who was occupying her studio, and wondering what tragedy was hidden behind it all—until she fell asleep.

In the morning the doctor came out of the studio, with a look upon his face which immediately quenched Mary's anticipations of anything pleasant.

"I am afraid," he said, as he followed her into the sitting-room and took his seat at the breakfast-table—"I am afraid that this may turn out rather more serious than you expect."

Mary looked up earnestly.

"It seems to me," he went on, "that there was a rather serious affray out in the road last night, and St. Hill does not please me. There are signs—symptoms of a serious illness, perhaps, and I hardly know what to do. I am afraid—well," he concluded, abruptly;

"I am afraid that he ought not to be moved—for a day or two, at any rate."

Mary opened her eyes and a slight flush ran up into her cheeks.

"Oh, doctor!" she said, "and shall we have to nurse him?"

He smiled at her confused face.

"My dear young lady," he replied, "hardly! I should send down a nurse, of course; but I was thinking of you—of the inconvenience and worry if he should become seriously ill; and I think—perhaps—if he—were—moved at once——"

He broke off, doubtfully. Mary leant over the table.

"I should never *dream* of sending him away if there was any danger," she declared. "I could go myself—easily. I could give the cottage up to you and go to my aunt in Brixton for a bit. Oh, I can manage *that*."

The doctor looked slightly relieved.

"Then I ought to tell you," he added, presently, "that—that there may be police-court proceedings. I don't know, of course, what happened last night, but if St. Hill fired at anybody, or if anybody fired at him, something may come of it, you know."

Mary looked aghast.

"Oh, well!" she remarked, presently, when she had recovered herself a little. "We won't think of that—it's only 'may be,' and we'll leave it. I daresay it was a poacher or a tramp or something, and he's probably got clear away by this time."

Then, suddenly, a thought struck her.

"Why," she cried, "by rushing out like that I may have saved his money, mayn't I? If it was some

tramp trying to rob him he may have heard me and bolted. Oh, fancy! I'm really quite a heroine."

The reflection seemed to please her, and she sat thinking profoundly for a minute or two, while the doctor waited patiently for his breakfast. She remembered him suddenly, and began hurriedly pouring out the coffee.

"I'm awfully sorry, doctor; you must be starving," and she energetically handed him the cup and pushed over the toast.

"Now tell me all about this St. Hill," she demanded, presently. "Who is he?"

The doctor replied, slowly.

"Well, I don't know that I can tell you



"MARY LOOKED AGHAST."

much," he said. "His father is a Major St. Hill, and lives a little farther along the common. I know Hugh, because I am his father's doctor, but it is some time since I saw him, and—and—he has altered a little. He was a boy—or, at any rate, boyish a few years ago. He's older now, of course."

The statement was beyond dispute, and Mary laughed.

"Of course," she said, "but is that all?"

"All?"

"Yes; I mean, isn't there anything interesting about him—adventures or anything? Is he only his father's son and nothing else?"

The doctor studied the bottom of his cup. There were things which he did not like to tell her—things which he could not mention while St. Hill was in the house and helpless, and he took a hurried sip of his coffee grounds.

"No, that's all," he replied. But that was not exactly true, and Mary's face looked slightly disappointed, for she had made up her mind that he was an adventurer at least.

During the next few days many things happened. A nurse came with great stir and bustle and took charge of the studio; the symptoms which the doctor had dreaded had abated, and the arm began to heal, and Mary and young St. Hill became thick friends. The doctor did not seem particularly pleased at this latest development, and waited with some impatience for the day to come when St. Hill could be moved.

Meanwhile the nurse, an old and florid person, watched the proceedings with disgust. She had "views" with regard to the sick room, and if she had had her own way would have locked the invalid up by himself and treated him to a severe diet of Liebig and sermons; and when Mary sacrificed her last chrysanthemums to brighten the room and played waltzes to him, and came in armed with the latest magazines and all the up-to-date literature she could get, her feelings verged on open rebellion.

"This is against all the rules," said Mary one afternoon as she

came in with a tray laden with toast and cake and other indigestible luxuries; "but nurse won't be back for *hours* yet, and I know it will do you good."

She deposited the tray on a table and wheeled it up to the couch where St. Hill lay, partially dressed in a smoking-jacket. She sat down calmly and began pouring tea, and he watched her with an eager light in his grey eyes. She certainly looked rather pretty as she sat there, with the light from a lamp falling on her fair hair, and the interested look in her face that altered it so much; and he, with his critical eyes, noting the details of her dress, saw that it was simple and plain and neat, and liked it. He watched her little hands—not white, but rough and red, with gardening and housework—and he liked them better than the hands of most women he had known, and he lay back luxuriously and allowed them to hand him his tea.

"By Jove, you've been awfully good to me," he observed. "If it hadn't been for you I—I might have died." The thought of death was not pleasant, and he shuddered. "It was almost a tragedy," he went on. "It was very nearly U.P.—up." Then, suddenly, he met her eyes, and the light died out of his. "I'm not sure that it isn't a tragedy still," he added; "that it may end a tragedy after all."

She dropped a lump of sugar into his cup with a splash.

"Oh, no, indeed," she said, hopefully, "there's no danger of that. The doctor said this morning that there was no fear whatever of a relapse, and in a day or two you will be quite well."

St. Hill's face changed a little.

"Yes," he said, slowly; but his eyes lingered on her face with something in them which, if she had seen, she would not have understood—something which he scarcely understood himself.

"You must be awfully brave," he said, after a while; "you come and take a cottage out here, away from everybody, and live your own life—you're very independent, you know. And then, that night you were



"SHE CAME IN WITH A TRAY."

awfully plucky. I could never have done it if I had been a woman."

"Oh, yes, you could," said Mary; "besides, I didn't stop to think, and I was simply *dying* for something to happen—I didn't care what, much. It was really awfully silly. Supposing you had been a tramp or something horrible?"

He smiled. "I might have murdered you, eh?"

She nodded.

"Or robbed you? Or ran away with Emma? Or shot Confucius?"

She nodded again. "Oh, yes, any of those things. You might have been a perfect beast."

"How do you know that I am not?" he asked, suddenly.

"Of course, I know you're not," she replied, laughing.

"But *now* do you know?" he persisted. "Supposing I told you that I *was* a beast, what then?"

"I should laugh at you," she said.

"Yes, yes, you might laugh. But would you believe it, if I told you, that I was—er—say, a cad or something beastly?"

"Oh, I know you're not."

"Supposing I told you that that night, when I was riding home, I had robbed a man—that I had played him a trick which was equivalent to putting my hand in his pocket and taking his money—you wouldn't believe me?"

He raised himself on his elbow and looked eagerly into her face. She did not meet his eyes—something in them embarrassed her—but got up and went to the mantelpiece, where she drummed abstractedly with her fingers.

"I know you wouldn't do such a thing," she said, obstinately. "I can see it in your face."

He fell back again.

"Miss Holt, come here. Please sit down there, opposite me, and look me in the face. Now, don't you see 'blackguard' written there on every line?"

He forced himself to meet her gaze, but his lip quivered. She did not know what it cost him to look at her then, and when she said "no" he almost laughed.

"Miss Holt," he cried, hoarsely, "it lies—my face lies. Listen to me. I must tell you—God knows why, but I must be honest for once. You evidently know nothing about me—you don't know what I am and the doctor has told you nothing—but I tell you now that I am a blackguard from beginning to end."

She listened, with her white face staring into the fire, while he plunged into details of his life—of a reckless sowing of wild oats, of gambling, drinking, and racing, to which, in what was apparently an effort to shock her, he added all the horrors he could remember.

"Then that night—nearly a fortnight ago now, isn't it?—I had been playing cards all the afternoon at a house on the other side of the common, and I cheated. It was not the first time either. I was in want of money—on my last legs in fact, and the fool let me cheat until Heaven knows how much of his paper I had. If you don't mind handing me that coat, we'll see."

For a moment she hesitated. Then she got up mechanically and gave it to him. He plunged his hand into one of the pockets and brought up a packet of 10 U's.

"Ten—twenty—sixty," he counted, "and a cheque for £1,000. That meant ruin to him, and I knew it. Yet I took it."

He stopped and looked at her half defiantly, as if he wanted to rouse her indignation.

"Do you wonder," he added, "that when he found out that I had cheated he rode after me and shot me? He was a passionate man, with an ungovernable temper, and it was he who did it—no tramp, no robber, but a man who had once been a friend of mine, and who had once—believed in me. . . . Oh, no, Miss Holt, you are mistaken. I am a veritable blackguard—a 'perfect beast.'"

She sat clasping her hands, looking into the fire, and just then Emma's ludicrous prophecy that "bad'll come of it, miss," flashed into her mind. She felt her heart contract suddenly—she suspected (as one is sometimes only half conscious of a wound) that she had been hurt, but a minute later she turned.

"I don't know—I can't tell," she said, between tears and laughter. "You sound very bad, but—but Confucius took to you, and he never took to a wholly bad man yet."

St. Hill's eyes met hers with a strange, strained look in them. In all his life he had never met a woman like Mary Holt—he had never known anyone who had a good word to say for a penniless blackguard, but she was made of different stuff, and he felt somehow that she would have found a good point in him if he had been blacker even than he had painted himself.

"You're not like most women," he said, slowly, "and—and—somehow, I wish I *could* have made myself a bit of a hero in your eyes."



"OH, NO, MISS ROSE, YOU ARE MISTAKEN."

A few days later Hugh St. Hill departed. Mary stood leaning over the gate watching the carriage disappear round the bend of the road, and then the dreariness and desolation settled down upon the cottage again.

It all became once more as it had been—lonely and quiet, and yet nothing seemed the same.

Shortly after St. Hill had gone, his father (who had been away while Hugh was at the cottage) called to thank Mary in person for her kindness to his son, and after that all news about him seemed to find its way to her. She heard about his wild career at college, of his still wilder and more desperate deeds in London, and then she heard that after his arm had healed his almost broken-hearted father declared he would pay no more debts for him. Then, strange to say, Hugh had suddenly settled down. People refused to believe it at first. They said he would break out again, and they waited with becoming patience for him to do so. But he never did. Perhaps his close escape from death had unnerved him. At any rate, he gave up his cards and gambling, he neglected his old companions, and took to spending his evenings at bezique with the major, until his regiment was ordered out to the East.

Then people promptly forgot all about

him. That is to say, some people did, but Mary was obstinate. She could not forget the face which she had seen lying helpless and pitifully white in her little cottage, and the ugly stories clung to her memory (as ugly stories will), and made her wonder sometimes what he was doing out in India where the soldiers were fighting and brave men falling every day. Was he gambling and betting and drinking there, too?

"Of course he was wrong—oh, yes, he was wrong altogether," she

said one day to the doctor, whom she met on the common. "But he was brave, I am sure he was brave; and—and sometimes I don't think that he could have been—altogether—bad."

The doctor looked at her keenly with his quizzical eyes.

"Well, do you know," he said, "I've just heard something which makes me think that there is some good in him somewhere. One can never tell. He has been a black sheep, and people have been condemning him—calling him ugly names for years; but to-day I have heard a queer story, and I'll tell it to you, provided you keep it to yourself."

"Of course I will," said Mary, quickly.

"Well, it's this. The man who shot him is a friend of mine, Thomas Day. He was once a close friend of St. Hill's, but he found him out, and he's been calling him names like the rest of 'em. Now, however, he sings a rather different tune. Some time ago it appears he received a mysterious letter containing a large sum of money. It contained a slip of paper saying only, 'This is owing to you.' There was no clue to the sender, not the slightest; and, strange to say, a friend of his received a similar letter at the same time. Day was determined to ferret the matter out,

and at last—after a lot of trouble—detectives and so on—what do you think he has found?"

Mary did not know, but the colour had gone from her face, and her eyes told the doctor a story.

"St. Hill," he said, briefly and suddenly. "St. Hill! It appears he had some money left him a short time ago, and no one knew what he did with it. It went somewhere, and that's where. He has been sending it quietly back to the men he cheated, never thinking he would be found out, of course. He need not have done it. Perhaps his conscience bothered him, and you know, Miss Holt, he had a narrow squeeze when he was shot that time. The bullet was precious close—a bit of an inch more, and St. Hill would never have gone to the East. Perhaps that sobered him. You know I thought he was a big scamp at that time, and I didn't half like the idea of his being in your cottage. However, one can never tell—never tell. This money business is rum to me. It seems as if—well, as if he had had his fling, you know; and, perhaps, with this fighting in India he may turn out a better man than we think."

He hurried off, and Mary went slowly back to the cottage. She found Emma kneeling with a bucket over the stain in the carpet, which still obstinately refused to budge.

"Just look at it, mum!" she cried, as she caught sight of her mistress in the doorway. "Did you *ever*?"

She brandished a brush with supreme disgust, and Mary, with the doctor's story in her ears, quite forgot her usual dignity.

"Oh, he was a hero after all, Emma," she cried, excitedly. "He was a better man than you think. I'm sure he was a better man than we think."

Emma, who probably thought very little about it, opened her eyes, and Mary fled in haste to escape the puzzled look of surprise and consternation she saw in them.

It was nearly three years before St. Hill came back to the cottage, and then he came under slightly different circumstances—he called. He came up the path with his arm in a sling—even as he had gone—and he looked very much the same, with the same keen face, the same bright eyes and smile, but there was a difference, and Mary knew it. He had distinguished himself in India. He had been the bravest of the brave, risking his life to save others, forgetting himself for the sake of the men around him, and he came home with a Victoria Cross in his

pocket and a title to his name; and just then all England rang with it.

But to anyone who watched him walk up the path he would have appeared almost nervous—not at all like a national hero. He walked slowly, and his face had a strained white look which was not entirely due to the pain in his arm. He went up the cottage path, and what happened then no one can exactly say; but I know this—he went up to Mary, who looked rather white, and took her hand in his uninjured one.

"Mary," he said, "three years ago I was a blackguard. If it hadn't been for you I



"MARY," HE SAID, "THREE YEARS AGO I WAS A BLACKGUARD."

might have been a blackguard still. I know I'm not up to much now, but for your sake I've tried to be a little better, and—and—Mary, I care a very great deal about you."

Then Mary did a very foolish thing—she cried, and St. Hill very clumsily took her in his arms—or, rather, arm—and made a suggestion.

Afterwards, when Emma was informed that Hugh was going to marry her mistress, she looked triumphant.

"There! What did I tell yer?" she exclaimed. "I said as bad 'ud come of it, an' it 'as!"

Humour in the Law Courts.

By "BRIEFLESS."

Illustrated from Sketches by the late SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD.



TO the world at large, law is little associated with laughter. That the courts have their humorous side, however, even in these days of sober decorum, one fully realizes after glancing through a collection of sketches which the late Sir Frank Lockwood made within their precincts. But litigants seldom see this humorous side, and nearly all the published pencillings of the popular member for York have been of his Parliamentary life.

At the same time it may be at once admitted that the finest humour of the Law Courts is of the unconscious kind. Perhaps the leading (unreported) case of this kind arose out of Mr. Justice North's sweet

innocence. His lordship was summing up a case of assault upon a policeman.

"It is quite certain," he observed, "that prisoner and prosecutor had been on the best of terms, addressing each other by the Christian name"—it had been proved that on the previous night the prisoner, in passing the policeman, had said, "Good night, Robert."

As a rule judges' jokes, unlike lovers' perjuries, would not excite the laughter of Jove. It was under the provocation of a very hot afternoon that Mr. Justice Barnes, in reply to an inquiry from Mr. Inderwick, Q.C., as to whether his lordship intended to continue Admiralty work, facetiously remarked, "Yes, I shall stop at the seaside till the end of the term."

Mr. Justice Kekewich, in all weathers, tries to relieve the dulness of Chancery work, and now and again he is successful. He was trying an action, "Heap v. Pickles," and some confusion arose as to the various members of defendant's family. "They're a mixed lot," his lordship quietly observed, amid the approving smiles of the Court.

Among present-day members of the Bench, Mr. Justice Chitty has achieved the most brilliant piece of judicial wit. Some pieces of plaster fell one day in his court, and all eyes were

raised apprehensively to the ceiling. "Fiat justitia, ruat coelum," promptly said the judge, who sat unmoved. Mr. Justice Chitty is the only judge who was ever a match for the truculent cleverness of Mr. J. F. Oswald, Q.C., in his junior days.

Those who happened to see a certain farce at a London theatre a year or so ago will remember that its

Earning his money.



And then gentlemen remember she is a woman—woman the source of all our joys. The willing sharer of our troubles. Woman in whose beauty we catch as it were a glimpse of a better world, and the light rattle of whose garments, is as the gentle fluttering of an angel's wing. Gaze on these features, and in the names of all your grandmothers, mothers, sweet mothers in law, lords, and Chancery say that they are the lovely personification of ingenuit

wittiest lines were uttered by a pseudo-magistrate in a police-court scene.

"Now, I'll address myself to the furniture," said a voluble stage barrister, after a pause to take breath.

"You've been doing that for some time," said the magistrate.

Well, this little incident actually occurred one day in the High Court of Justice, in a bill of sale case, its victim being Mr. Oswald, and its hero Mr. Justice Chitty.

Mr. Justice Kay once attempted in a similar fashion to crush the audacious young barrister with a disastrous result—to himself.

"I can teach you law, sir, but I cannot teach you manners," the judge angrily asserted.

"That is so, my lord," was the meek, yet merciless, reply.

Breach of promise cases, as the first of the accompanying sketches would suggest, are a perennial source of amusement in the courts. Barristers of the Serjeant Buzfuz type are, it need hardly be said, almost as extinct as the dodo, but in such cases I have heard more than one burst of eloquence to which Sir Frank Lockwood's travesty would have done no injustice. Mr. Wildey Wright, for instance, was once heard to declare that "the defendant by his dastardly conduct has cruelly cast my fair client adrift on the sea of life," and so on for four, five, or ten minutes, amid the weeping of the plaintiff, a fat widow of fifty, and the tittering of the junior Bar.

But it is the poetry of "the parties," of course, rather than the perorating of counsel, which is usually most entertaining in these actions. Some of the judges, however, turn a callous ear to the poetry and will not join in the mirth which a barrister will generally try to evoke from it. After quoting freely from the defendant's effusions, a certain Q.C. happened to refer to the *pro* and *con*s of the case.

"I suppose," the judge interrupted, "that we have already had the *con*s. We shall be exceedingly glad to hear the *pro*se."

For poetical quotations some barristers have a

great weakness. They will quote the most flippant verse in illustration of the most serious arguments. Thus Mr. Pember, Q.C., when appearing some time ago for an electric lighting company, and contending against several rival enterprises, dared to speak the following Gilbertian lines:—

On mature consideration

And careful meditation

Of all the petty projects that have here been shown,
Not a scheme in agitation

For this world's amelioration

Has a grain of common sense in it except my own.

It was one of the present Lords of Appeal, if I remember rightly, who startled the dull serenity of his court by a quotation from "Hudibras." In a "light and air" action a scientific witness attempted to prove the exact amount of light which would be obstructed by a proposed new building, and his lordship, losing patience with such pedantry, compared him with the philosopher in Butler's satire:—

In mathematics he was greater

Than Tycho Brahe or Era Pater;

For he by geometric scale

Could take the size of pots of ale;

Resolve by sines and tangents straight

If bread and butter wanted weight.

Mr. Murphy, Q.C., who may have unconsciously posed for Sir Frank's picture of the forensic giant overwhelming his opponent with his "O! object," has added a good deal to the gaiety of the courts. His name as well as his figure has occasioned jokes. In a patent boiler case, for instance, Sir Henry James once had to define to the Lords of Appeal the exact meaning of the word "steaming." Just as he was explaining and illustrating the technical point, Mr. Murphy

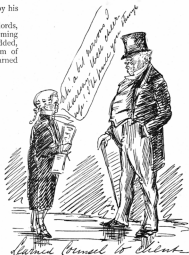


arrived in very hot haste and sat down by his side.

"We have, I suppose, all heard, my lords, of the domestic operation known as steaming potatoes," said Sir Henry, and then added, as he turned to the big, perspiring form of his colleague in the case, "but my learned friend is probably best acquainted with that process."

On the other hand, there are even smaller men (both literally and metaphorically) at the Bar than Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Charles Mathew, Q.C., whose diminutive stature when contrasted with burly clients in the witness-box is apt to excite mirth. The small barrister "protecting" a big John Bull in Sir Frank Lockwood's sketch has, in fact, often had its actual counterpart in the courts.

There are certain recurring occasions on which frequenters of the courts always expect some amount of entertainment, the chief of these being the "calling" of new Q.C.'s



In the Corridor.



"Get nearly interlarded with warmies! I'll back to go prosecuting Nimmercent fellow creature"

within the Bar. It is an inviolable convention that every barrister, on whom "silk" has been conferred, should make a tour of the courts in his new gown, plus silk stockings and knee-breeches. The unhappy man, probably middle-aged and father of a family, who generally wears these latter articles for the first time in his life, has to visit each court in turn, bow to the judge, and then to the amused juniors, whose ranks he has just left, accompanied by his clerk carrying the new silk hat and white kid gloves which equally powerful tradition obliges his employer to present to him in honour of the auspicious occasion.

One of these sketches was evidently suggested to Sir Frank Lockwood by the sight of an inebriated defendant "bully-ragging" the barrister who had unsuccessfully prosecuted him. At one time drunken witnesses gave rise to a good deal of mirth in the courts. But now-

days judges take a sterner view of their failings, and witnesses "in their hiccupps" are seldom called into the witness-box.

It was doubtless these changed circumstances which led a well-known barrister to make what was a unique application, although it did not appear in the *Times* law reports. The learned gentleman asked that the evidence of a certain witness, who was of intemperate habits, might be taken on commission, because it was feared that the refreshment-bar in the courts would prove too great a temptation for the witness to resist. The Court did not grant the application, but it forgave the jest.

Drowsy judges, on the other hand, still occasionally call forth suppressed mirth. That the judges should be so very human as to doze during a dull case may in some people excite indignation rather than their sense of humour. *Habités* of the court, however, have never known serious consequences proceed from a judge's *siesta*. The worst offender appears to have the happy knack of waking up the moment that anything of real importance requires his attention, thus sustaining the charitable theory that a judge can hear best with closed eyelids.

Once, indeed, his forty winks did put the judge in a dilemma. A telegram was brought into court for a member of the jury. The usher turned to the judge for the permission without which nothing can be given to any of the twelve good men and true. But his lordship was asleep, and no dexterous shifting of books or loud coughing would awaken him.

At last, in despair, the official ventured to hand the telegram to the jurymen, who covertly read it, fearing every second that his lordship would suddenly open his eyes and discover the misdeed. The incident began with an "audible smile," and ended with a sigh of relief on the part of the Court.

The etiquette of the Bar sometimes gives rise to ludicrous incidents. It is essential, for instance, to his *locus standi* that a barrister should be wearing wig and gown. In the Divorce Court some time ago Mr. Justice Barnes refused to see Mr. Bargrave Deane because he was without these emblems of professional dignity. He had hurriedly entered the court on some small errand, to find that the date of hearing an important case in which he was engaged was under discussion. On a momentary impulse Mr. Bargrave Deane, wishing to correct a misstatement, began to address the judge. But his lordship at once stopped him with the remark, "You're invisible to me, Mr. Deane," preserving all the time the only grave countenance in the court.

The Old Bailey and the Criminal Courts generally have a distinctive humour of their own. To a number of young barristers the brightest side of the Central Criminal Court is seen in the distribution of its "soup." "Soup" is professional slang for the prosecuting briefs which are given in turn by the Crown to all the members of the Old Bailey Bar Mess. In "*Valse à la Procuration*" Sir Frank Lockwood has strikingly symbolized the feelings of one of these juniors who has just won his first verdict.



THE BENEVOLENT BUS



By JOHN OXENHAM.

WE were all four of us—Rupert Scriven, of the *New York World*; George W. Wyllie, of the U.S. Navy, his cousin; Dudley K. Wauters, son of the millionaire of the same name; and myself—sitting in the smoking-room of the hotel with our after-breakfast cigars, just one week after our great adventure up the dome of St. Paul's, when we held the Golden Gallery against all comers for the space of two nights and a day, in order to see the "dear Queen" go by in all the pomp and pride of her Jubilee.

Scriven was a trifle sulky. Miss Van Toller, the pretty American girl who sat next to him at dinner whenever her mother did not do so, was at him all the time to take her up to the Golden Gallery. And it put him into an awkward position, for he dared not go anywhere near St. Paul's, and yet he did not want to offend the heiress.

"I'm just about sick of St. Paul's, anyway," he growled. "It's possible to have too much even of a good thing."

"Meaning Miss Van Toller?" asked Dudley.

Scriven cocked his cigar up in one corner of his mouth and said nothing, and just then one of the coach horns sounded outside, and

he got up and went to the window to see the coach start.

"Handles 'em well," said Wyllie, looking out also.

"It's easy enough," said Scriven. "Just knack and nerve. Roads like a billiard-table——"

"And any amount of fools around," said Wyllie, as a yellow motor-cab stole up from behind the coach and stopped shuddering under the startled leaders' noses, and a nervous cyclist came skidding into the motor-cab, and went down with a crash.

"I'd like to see the old boy there," said Scriven, indicating the purple-faced coachman, who was gurgling with joy at the tribulations of his natural enemies, "take a team down the Nevada passes. He'd get some new notions about driving—if he didn't have a fit."

"Oh, come off, Scriven," said I, for he was rather given to spread-eaglesism. "I bet you couldn't take a team, not even an ordinary two-horse penny 'bus, through the City and back without getting into trouble."

"Pouff! I'd do it on my head, as your old ladies say to their magistrates."

"It would be a very interesting exhibition," I said; "and if I was cursed with Dudley K.'s wealth I'd buy a 'bus and give you the chance of teaching the London 'busmen their business."

"What's that about Dudley K.?" asked that lazy youth, from the depths of a big leather chair.

"Old Spread-eagle here wants to turn 'bus-driver to show the others how to do it properly."

"Well, why doesn't he do it? Guess we can knock spots off 'em——"

"Paint," I suggested.

"——if your 'bus-driving's no livelier than your papers."

"Hear, hear!" said Scriven, who had been wrestling with *Punch* that morning and had been in a gloomy frame of mind ever since.

"Say, I've got an idea!" burst out Wauters, suddenly.

"H'sh-h-h!" said Wyllie, "it's the first he ever had. Let it hatch out and I'll cable it to his father. It'll mean at least five thousand a year on his allowance."

But Dudley was rocking to and fro with his hands clasped round one knee, in the process of incubation.

"Come up to my room, Rupe, old man," he said, jumping up suddenly. "We'll work this out together."

I had an appointment down Fleet Street, and Wyllie, who dabbled in colours himself a bit, decided to put in the morning at the National Gallery. So we did not meet the others again until lunch-time.

Wauters was evidently in a suppressed fever of excitement. Scriven's time was fully occupied parrying Miss Van Toller's requests to be taken up to the Golden Ball. She saw that for some reason he was against her going; her chief object in life for the moment, therefore, was to get him to take her.

"Come along to my room, boys," said Dudley, the moment dinner was finished. "We've got it all planned out—no end of a lark, if we can work it out properly."

"Oxenham," he burst out, as soon as we had lighted up in his room, "we want a 'bus, a regular ordinary, garden-seat, Putney to Whitechapel, penny-all-the-way, Benk-benk 'bus. Now, where can we get one—for a week—with proper changes of horses, and all hunk-a-dory? If we can't make this benighted old centre of civilization hum, write me down a Croton water-bag. It's my idea, mind you, and I'm going to carry it through or bust. Old Rupe's going to be driver. I'm going to be conductor. You two can be anything you like, directors or checkers, or just plain passengers. We don't take any fares, mind you, but instead we give everybody who boards the 'bus a little present of

some kind—bunch of flowers and so on. How does it strike you?"

"It's magnificent," I said, in reply to his anxious look, "if you can stand the racket. You've got a return ticket home, haven't you?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Because Scriven will pile up such a load of damages on the first journey, between Mansion House Station and Bank Corner, that you'll be bust sky-high. I should make it a limited company if I were you—small capital—shares all issued fully paid—you might even get out debentures on the 'bus, and in common decency you ought to hand every passenger an accident insurance policy as soon as he climbs on board."

"Oh, go 'way," said Dudley, with all the wild enthusiasm of a discoverer, and the blind eye of a patentee to the other side of things; "Rupe'll do the driving all right, and I take all the risks. Where'll we get the 'bus?"

"I'll find you the 'bus," I said; "it'll have to belong to someone who won't be completely ruined if it gets smashed. You'll probably have to give him an indemnity."

"That's all right. How soon can you get it?"

"George and I will take a trot round this afternoon. When do you want to start?"

"Start fair Monday morning. Rupe wants to go over the course, and I'll have some things to get."

"And as to payment?—money not so much an object as a——"

"Comfortable 'bus," broke in Dudley. "You're sure you can get one?"

"You can get anything in London if you're ready to pay for it. I'll get the 'bus all right. Come along, George, and we'll go on a 'bus-hunt."

It really was a very simple matter. We walked down into Parliament Street, picked out the dandiest hansom on the rank, and told him to drive towards Marble Arch. Before we got there we had the driver down, and questioned him as to where the owner of a pirate 'bus was to be found.

As soon as he was satisfied that the question was prompted by a genuine desire for information, he drove us straight to a yard in a by-street off Hammersmith Road, in the neighbourhood of Brook Green, where we found exactly what we wanted. And the 'bus which stood in the yard had been newly done up for the Jubilee, and looked as near like the genuine article as red paint and varnish could make it, and yet withal

nature of a wager an American gentleman had undertaken to drive the 'bus in the City for a week, and that, if he smashed the 'bus or anything else, he lost his wager and made good all damages.

The man's eyes glistened sportively.

Incidentally, I mentioned that no fares would be taken.

"Take no fares?" he gasped. "Why, it's a fair tempting o' Providence."

"Well, you see, there'd be the license, I suppose, if we took any fares."

"That's so. By Jinks, gents, I'd like to be there to see the fun! No fares! Gosh! if you'd told me there was no fares I'd been inclined to knock off ten bob a day just 't' think o' them other fellows' noses bein' put out o' j'int, and 't' see their eyes fall out. No fares!—by gosh!"

"Well, perhaps you'll be better by then. What's wrong?"

He looked up at us, and said, cautiously, "It's a dead sure go at three quid a day? All clear and no drowing back?"

"Three quid a day," I said, "and no drowing back."

"Well, I broke me bloomin' leg falling off the bloomin' 'bus day after Jub'lee, an' I'm stuck here for a month. That's w'at's wrong, gents, an' your three quid a day'll be a nice little help till it jines up again."

"That's all right. If you'll get me some paper and a pen we'll put it all down in black and white. Then there can be no mistake."

That was how we got the 'bus, and on the Monday morning we all four set off for the yard, and found the 'bus awaiting us in full working order.

Wauters and Scriven had been full of business and mysteries for the last few days, and they would not even admit Wyllie and myself to their confidence. They bade us just wait and leave it all to them, and we would see what we would see. Dudley K. had never been so busy before in the whole course of his life, and such an air of business-like animation pervaded him that it is doubtful if his own stepmother would have known him. Scriven, used to the rush and bustle of journalistic life, took matters more coolly. He had been over the course three or four times, and had every confidence in himself.

These two chief actors in the little comedy had dressed for their parts in somewhat sportive light tweeds of most elegant cut, brown bowler hats, tan boots, painfully striking new tan gloves, and remarkable button-holes. They were eminently well

pleased with themselves, and when Dudley had borrowed a hammer and some tacks from Mrs. Pirate, and had, with his own new tan kids, nailed to the mast which stood by the side of the driver a very elegant little silken Star and Stripes, and had tacked over the table of fares inside an artistically designed notice which boldly stated, "ALL FARES FREE TO-DAY," he went into the house at Mr. Pirate's strenuous request, to have his hand shaken by that worthy, who looked more unshaven and tousled than ever, and to be told by him that he was a genuine sportsman.

Then he sprang on to the step, as to the manner born, shouting, "Now, gents, all aboard! Benk—Benk—Benk! Here y'are, sir! Here y'are! Benk—Benk—Benk!" rang the bell imperatively half-a-dozen times, and, as Wyllie and I scrambled in, the Benevolent 'Bus started on its wild career.

Scriven tooled the team down the Hammersmith Road for a mile or two, "just to learn their paces, and to see how they answered the helm," as Wyllie said, and then we turned towards town, and the fun began.

We told Dudley he was quite the nicest conductor we had ever seen, the cleanest and smartest and best dressed, and not bad looking on the whole.

"You bet your boots that's what all the girls on this route will be saying before the week's out. You just wait and see, my chickens! Dudley K. Wauters is running this show, and Dudley K. knows what he's about."

He rang the bell once or twice just to see that Scriven up aloft was fully alive to his duties and responsibilities, and was as pleased and proud of his control as a newly-appointed captain of his first command.

"Hist!" I whispered, "here's fare number one. Wyllie, get up on deck and help Scriven. I'll see to Dudley K."

"Hyde Park, miss? Here you are. Allow me!"

She was a very pretty girl and very nicely dressed, and Dudley K. handed her in with an air of the most polished and courteous deference. She went up to the front corner seat without noticing the announcement about the fares, and Dudley K. bent all his attention on scooping in other passengers.

Occasionally, however, he turned round to glance at his pretty first acquisition, and it was during one of these momentary lapses from the strict path of duty that an old gentleman coming along a side-street signalled to him to

stop, and when he reached the corner, bellowed like a fog-horn, and came hobbling after the 'bus in a fury of indignation.

"What d'ye mean by not stopping—you—you——?" he could find neither words nor breath sufficient for his feelings. "Haven't you got any eyes in your head, man? I'll report you as soon as I get to town. Served me just the same trick yesterday—ruffian! It's a perfect outrage!"—this last to me.

"Very reprehensible," said I, soothingly.

"Reprehensible!" said the old gentleman, savagely, and still panting; "outrageous is what I call it—perfectly outrageous."

"I ask a thousand pardons, sir, for my momentary negligence," said Dudley K., in his most cultivated manner, "and I beg to assure you that it was no intentional slight to which you were subjected. You see," he said, with a confidential and engaging smile, "this is my very first appearance on this or any other 'bus."

"Bless my soul!" said the old gentleman, and his red and yellow bandanna stopped half-way up to his damp nose, and his mouth hung open with surprise. Then he looked across at me again and shook his head, and said, "Drink, I suppose. Great pity."

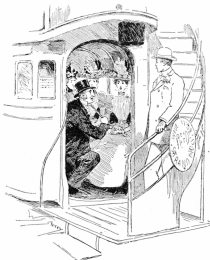
"Yes," I said, with a melancholy, assenting wag; "very sad, very sad indeed." And Dudley K. scorched me with a look, and then turned to gather in a very stout lady, who brought in with her a strong odour of heliotrope and two very slim-waisted daughters, whose elegantly-compressed figures left Nature nowhere, and whose somewhat supercilious bearing conveyed an impression of resigned sufferance of the public exhibition of the over-ample proportions of their capacious parent.

"Piccadilly Circus, young man—don't forget!" wheezed the lady of parts, as she lowered herself into a seat and somewhat disturbed the trim of the 'bus.

"Right, madam, I will bear it in mind. Now, then"—to the outsiders—"Hyde Park, Piccadilly, Charing Cross, Benk—Benk—Benk—all the way—Benk—Benk—Benk!"

The 'bus filled up rapidly both inside and out. Scriven had so far run into nothing, and had dutifully responded to all Dudley K.'s calls upon him, and we were getting along as nicely and comfortably as could be, when suddenly the old gentleman broke out with a loud "God bless my soul!" of the most concentrated amazement.

"W—w—w—what's the meaning of that? Here, you, young man, what's the meaning of that, sir?" and he pointed at the notice about the fares with his stick, which quivered so with astonishment that it nearly went into the stout lady's eye, and she put up a



"W—w—w—WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THAT?"

fat, deprecating hand to ward it off—"What's it mean, young man?"

"It means, my dear sir, that all passengers travel free to-day. No fares whatever are taken."

"Bless my soul!" said the old gentleman. "Who's gone mad? What's the meaning of it?"

"Any distance?" asked the capacious lady.

"Any distance, madam," replied Dudley K., with a graceful inclination towards her.

"Then put us down as near to Wallis's as you go, young man. Don't forget—Wallis's. We may as well have a look round there and the churchyard first"—to her daughters.

"With pleasure, madam," said Dudley K., with his best cotillon bow, not understanding in the slightest her reference to the churchyard or where she wanted to go. He tried to catch my eye, but I was engaged in conversation with the old gentleman.

"Some new advertising idea, I suppose?" he said.

"Looks like it," said I, "though I don't at present see where the advertisement comes in."

"Oh, you will before you're allowed to get off—you'll see," he chuckled. "Say, young man, will you be running again to-morrow on the same lines?"

"We shall, sir, yes," said Dudley K., cheerfully—"if we're spared."

"Bless my soul!" said the old gentleman, again. "What a very strange young man!"

With much difficulty, because of a muffler and several coats in which the cord got entangled, he extracted a pair of glasses and hooked them over his nose. He regarded Dudley K. through them steadfastly, and took in all his points as if he were a strange new beast, then folded them up with a puzzled air and blinked across at me, and said "Humph!"

The passengers were all in a state of high good humour, and regarded one another with the tentative, vacuous smiles of complete strangers united suddenly in one common feeling by some unexpected happening. The old gentleman even ventured on a smiling remark to one of the capacious lady's much-compressed daughters.

"All fares free to-day! Really, it's about the most amusing thing I ever heard of."

"Very amusing!" said the young lady, with a frosty little smile.

"I don't think," he said, looking round with a comprehensive paternal beam, which ended with his fair neighbour again, "that I ever had a free ride on a 'bus before, not at all events since I was a very small—"

His biographical indiscretions were cut suddenly short by a spasmodic attempt on the part of our pretty first passenger to attract the attention of the conductor to the fact that she was being carried away past Hyde Park Corner.

"Want to get out, my dear?" chirped the old gentleman. "Allow me!" and the point of his stick planted an imperative call to duty between Dudley K.'s shoulder-blades.

Dudley turned, with a somewhat injured air, while his left hand curled up behind his back to remove the possible mark of the summons. When he saw the pretty girl fluttering down the narrow passage between the other people's knees towards him, however, he awoke to a due sense of his forgetfulness. He rang such a peal on the bell that the cord broke in his hand, and then he handed the young lady off on to the side-walk with the air of a master of ceremonies, and bowed, hat in hand, while he made his apologies.

"I ask a thousand pardons," I heard him say, while every eye in the 'bus was bent upon them to see what he gave her in the shape of an advertisement; "I promise you it shall not occur again." Then, while she tripped away with a rosy face, he swung himself on to the step with a "Right-away!" and set himself to mending the bell-rope.

"Extraordinary!" said the old gentleman across to me. "I didn't see him give her anything in the nature of an advertisement. What do you suppose is the meaning of it?"

"I'm sure I can't say. Perhaps he whispered it to her. I saw the young lady smiling."

He looked meditatively at me for a while, as the 'bus rumbled on along Piccadilly, and then said:—

"Yes, maybe that's the trick. It's a funny idea, but I'll know at the Circus. I get out there."

He got out at the Circus and waited with a knowing smile for the expected revelation. But the vacant spaces in and on the 'bus were occupied in a moment, and as Dudley K. touched his hat to him, and sprang on to the steps and started the 'bus, I could see the old fellow's "Bless my soul!" on his lips, as the smile died out of them, and he stood gazing after us with a dazed look of injured incredulity.

The expressions, facial and vocal, of the new passengers as their eyes lighted on the notice-board, and wandered wonderingly round the smiling faces of the initiated, were amazingly funny, but it would be impossible to chronicle them all.

As we drew down Fleet Street towards the shoals and quicksands of the City, I inquired from the conductor if there was any room on top, and learning that there was, I climbed the stairs, and sat down alongside Wyllie on the back seat.

I found that he had been enjoying himself quite as much as we had inside.

"It's simply immense!" he whispered.

"When Dudley came up and quietly said, 'No fares taken to-day, ladies and gents,' I nearly had a fit at the way they took it. It just fairly paralyzed them. At first they sat and looked at him with their mouths open, then when he'd gone down they all began talking twenty to the dozen, and asking if he was drunk, or what was the game he was up to. Oh, I tell you it's a great scheme this of old Dud's. Should never have thought he had it in him. Scriven's doing well, too, isn't he?"

"He's done first-rate so far, but the ticklish bits are coming. Wait till we get to Mansion House Station. From there to the Bank is the worst bit in the whole course."

However, Scriven got through all right, and the meteor flag fluttered proudly through the thick of the traffic, and suffered no dishonour. But when at last we drew up in the comparative calm of the backwater outside Broad Street Station the driver's face was beaded with perspiration, and his elegant tan gloves were in shreds.

"For Heaven's sake, old man," he gasped to me, "get me the biggest whisky-and-soda they can make. I swallowed the stub of my cigar by mistake when that brutal dray nearly ran into us just off the Mansion House. And, Wyllie, you run into yon shop and buy me two pairs of the strongest driving-gloves they keep in stock—number 10's."

"It's a deuce of a strain," he said, as he sighed into the empty tumbler; "not that the poor beggars pull much—nervousness, I suppose. I feel as if I'd been lifting this darned old caravan off other people's rigs with my two hands and legs ever since we started. It'll come easier after a bit."

Dudley K. came up on top, and we all compared notes, and enthusiastically congratulated him on the brilliancy of the first idea he had ever had of his very own.

We accomplished the return journey in safety also, and quite the most amusing experience in the course of it was with a market woman, who hailed us in the Strand, and tendered for transport a huge basket of roses.

"Here you are, miss," said Dudley K., jovially, as he caught hold of the basket.

"Miss, indeed!" snorted the irate lady of flowers, as she sank into a seat; "ere, young man, don't you go a-callin' of your betters names as don't belong to 'em. I'm a missis, I am. Married in church all tight and straight, and got my lines at home, if you wants to see 'em. Miss, indeed!" with an indignant sniff.

"Madam, a thousand pardons!" said Dudley K., with a bow. "Your agility and the sweet burden you bore reminded me inevitably of the goddess Flora. Hence my address!"

"I'll floor yer if yer don't shet up," said the lady. "I didn't arsk for yer address, an' I don't want it. Yer drunk, that's w'at's the matter w' you. Give me any more o' yer sass an' I'll report yer. See?"

"Madam, I apologize and retire!"

"Yes, yer'd better." And she twitched her crooked bonnet straight and adjusted her shawl combatively, and glared round at the rest of us with a challenging eye, and the discomfited Dudley fled up on top to hide his defeat.

She continued to fire off oburgations at him at spasmodic intervals when he came down again, but the crown of the joke came when she arrived at her destination.

"Now, then—you—you drunk! Put me darn at Perceval Street."

"Yes, madam," said Dudley. Then—foreseeing trouble from his ignorance of the locality—"Would you be so good as to tell me when we get there?"

"Tell yer w'en we git there?" she repeated, in a tone of extra-concentrated sarcasm. "W'y, yer there now, you—you dumhead! Can't yer see it? Are yer blind drunk?"

"Ah, I beg your pardon, madam. You see, I am new to this route. Allow me"—as the bus came to a stand and she descended.

Scriven was watching the disembarkation by means of the reflection in a shop-window. Without waiting for the signal he started the bus just a second too soon, and the heavy basket of roses, which Dudley was transferring to its owner, dropped to the ground, and shot its contents far and wide like the bursting of a fragrant bomb.

"Nar yer done it!" cried Flora, "yer done it a fair treat! I knowed you was drunk. D'n' I s'ye so? Who d'yer think's goin' to pye me fur them there flars, eh?"

"I am, madam," said Dudley, rising to the occasion. "Will this reimburse you for the damage done?" and he handed her a sovereign.

She looked at the sovereign and then at him, with her mouth wide open. Then she bit the coin, and then she spat on it for luck, and then, recovering her tongue, if not the full use of her wits, she gasped.

"Drunk as a sojer, an' it's in gaol ye'll be this night," and picked up her basket and



"'NAR YER DOIN' IT?" CRIED FLORA."

made off as fast as she could go with her share of the plunder.

And in imagination—and so real was it that I had to rub my eyes to make sure that it was only imagination—I saw the figure of the old gentleman, with his eyes fairly hanging out with astonishment as he looked after the retreating 'bus, and I saw his lips as they whispered, "Bless my soul! What a very extraordinary young man!"

I doubt if any four dinners were enjoyed with rarer appetites than were ours that day. In answer to her very pointed inquiries, I heard Scriven describing to the heiress with a minute labouring of detail, which in itself was highly suspicious, the delightful coach drive we had been having to St. Albans and back. And in answer to her further inquiries, I heard him tell her that the upper reaches of the tower of St. Paul's were still closed to the general public. The after-dinner cigars, too, and the recurring reminiscences of the day's doings, were also much enjoyed by three of us at all events. Scriven's hands and the calves of his legs were still very sore, and he averred that he could feel the unintentionally swallowed stub of his cigar still

smouldering inside him, and it needed many blended sodas to quench the flame, and to neutralize the effect of the concentration of nicotine.

Ten o'clock next morning found us *en route* again, and this time Dudley had three long flat boxes beside him, under the staircase which led up to the roof; and inside the 'bus, beneath the notice-board about the freedom from fares, was another notice which stated positively, but enigmatically: "THIS IS FLOWER DAY."

We very soon came across our pretty first passenger looking anxiously for a 'bus, though I would not like to say for our 'bus. But she recognised us at once, and the rosy smile which pervaded her face made her prettier than ever. Dudley, however, had some difficulty in persuading her to accept our hospitality again, and when at last she did get in, and took her seat up at the far end, he opened the topmost flat box and ran his eyes rapidly over the exquisite masses of colour inside, and in a moment, with a deferential bow, handed her a

tiny bouquet of deep red roses, made up with a few lilies and maidenhair, all neatly fitted into a slender filigree metal-holder. She was dressed in light grey, and the flowers contrasted admirably with her costume. But—

"Oh, excuse me, I could not think of accepting them," she said, with still more heightened colour.

Dudley pointed to the notice, and said, "My instructions are to present everybody who gets on the 'bus to-day with a bunch of flowers. See!" and he flicked open the boxes one after another, and the pretty eyes opened wide with amused astonishment.

He saw the old gentleman coming down his side-street, and dutifully drew up for him.

"Well, young man. You're here again?"

"At your service, sir!" said Dudley, saluting him with a bow.

"Finding your feet, eh?"

"Very much so," said Dudley, presenting him, as he sat down, with a button-hole of tea-rose and delicate fern fronds.

"Bless my soul! What's this?—Peace-offering?"

"Company's orders, sir," and he pointed

to the notice alongside the pretty blushing face of passenger number one.

The old gentleman recognised her and noticed her bunch of flowers. He recognised me also, and noticed my bunch of flowers. He bowed to us both and gasped, "God bless my soul! What's the meaning of it all?"

Just then a suppressed whoop from Dudley, which died into a vigorous chuckle, announced the advent of the stout heliotrope lady with her two compressed daughters, and a thin, elderly lady friend and her stout, well-proportioned daughter, who had evidently been brought to see the fun, and for the space of three minutes Dudley was kept busy suiting bouquets to customers, which he did in a way that spoke of considerable training and a very pretty taste.

"Why, we're quite a family party," said Mrs. Heliotrope, beaming round on us all as she recognised us one after the other.

"Just exactly what I was thinking, madam," said the old gentleman, with a responsive smile. "Exactly what it all means or who's crazy I can't make out, but we seem to be the beneficiaries, so I suppose we mustn't grumble."

The next arrival was, however, less essential to the enjoyment of our happy family than a stranger would have been—no less a personage, indeed, than our yesterday's Lady of Flowers, and Dudley K. went the colour of autumn sumach when he saw her.

She had her basket with her, and Dudley had some difficulty in accommodating it under his staircase. She had been too much occupied in boarding the 'bus and seeing to the safe storage of her impedimenta to pay any special attention to her surroundings. The presence of the other well-dressed women in such close proximity to her caused her to assume an air of defiance and resentment, which found outlet, both in tone and words, when Dudley graciously presented her with a bouquet from his box.

"Wot's this?" she asked. "I don't want none o' yer flars. W'en I wants flars I can buy 'em, thank Gawd!" Then, as her eyes rested resentfully on Dudley, a sudden light of recognition illumined her. "Ello! that you, my dandy? Got over it, 'ave you, and kep' out the hands of the perlice too? Well, you be keerful. I got my eye on you, my lad. Next time you starts calling lydies nymes, and then upsets 'em in the road, I puts the bobbies on to yer, sure. See?"

This made Dudley so extremely uncomfortable that I unwisely interfered, with the

result that I myself became the butt of the lady's sarcasms.

"You are not bound to accept the company's little present unless you want to," I said. "As I understand it, the conductor has been instructed to give everyone getting on to this 'bus a bouquet or a button-hole. Therefore he gave one to you along with the other ladies."

"Ow! An' who are you, mister? Are you the little dandyman's keeper? I didn't speak to you. I ain't been interjuiced."

"But we have met before," I said. "I happened to see the little accident yesterday when your flowers were unfortunately spilled through the 'bus starting too soon, and unless I am mistaken the conductor paid you their value many times over."

"Ow! Bragged about it, did 'e? Well, that ain't anythink to his credit."

"No, he didn't; I saw it all with my own eyes."

"Ow! Well, take my 'dvice, mister, and mind yer own bisness."

"Thank you!" said I.

"Don't menshn it," said Flora, and sniffed disdainfully and rearranged her shawl.

Then an abstracted checker nipped on to the 'bus and automatically demanded, "Tickets, please!"

We smiled at him pleasantly, and Dudley K., with great presence of mind, handed him a very charming button-hole of striped carnations and asparagus fern. The man looked round on us with a vacant stare, read the notices, awoke to the fact that he was in the enemy's camp, and, still holding his flowers, dropped off so hastily and heedlessly that he was within an inch of being run over by a hansom.

Then Scriven very nearly got us into trouble with a policeman. Our driver did something he ought not to have done, or left undone something he ought to have done, and Robert the Officious came climbing on board to demand why the metal disc bearing his number was not properly displayed.

Dudley presented him with a button-hole. Scriven drove calmly on, explaining intermittently over his left shoulder that, as we did not take any fares, he did not require a license, and therefore had no number, and therefore could not show it.

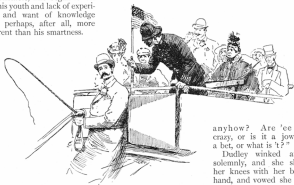
"Oh, gammon yer no fares!" said the officer, who was young and very smart. "If yer don't ply for fares, what do yer ply for? Come, now?"

"Fun!" said Dudley K.

"I'll fun yer. I've a good mind to summons you."

"See here, constable, you are, I presume, quite as well acquainted with the law as I am," said Scriven, in his top-loftiest manner. "You know perfectly well you cannot summon us without showing cause. Now, what cause have you to show?"

"Well, what'r'ye up to, anyway?" asked the constable, who began to feel that his youth and lack of experience and want of knowledge were, perhaps, after all, more apparent than his smartness.



"WELL, I'LL TAKE YER NAMES AND ADDRESSES."

"We're driving for our own amusement. Have you anything to say against it?"

"Well, I'll take yer names and addresses, anyhow."

"Will you, indeed? Conductor, take down this officer's number. We'll very soon see what Sir Edward has to say to it. We'll call at Scotland Yard with you on our return journey if you'll take a seat. Pray make yourself comfortable."

"Yer a rum lot," said the officer, "an' I must git back to my beat."

"Good-day," said Scriven, and the enterprising bobby disappeared along with his button-hole.

It would take altogether too long to describe in detail all the amusing happenings of that second day. Every person who got on the 'bus received a bouquet or a button-hole, and it was next to impossible to keep straight faces at the surprised comments which this and the freedom from fares gave rise to.

On our return journey we were hailed once more by our Lady of Flowers. I think she had been waiting for us. She came on board with a broad smile of satisfaction and an

unusually fine basket of her wares, and when Dudley courteously presented her with a second bouquet, she gave herself up to undiluted enjoyment of the situation.

"Well," she laughed, "if this don't beat everythink! Say, I tykes it all back w'at I said t'yer this mornin'. W'at be you up to,

anyhow? Are 'ee gone crazy, or is it a jowke, or a bet, or what is 't?"

Dudley winked at her solemnly, and she slapped her knees with her big red hand, and vowed she would travel by no other 'bus as long as this one kept on running.

The fame of the Benevolent 'Bus soon began to spread as our passengers retailed their strange but satisfactory experiences on board of it. The little meteor flag began to be looked out for and pointed at explanatorily, and many a biting sarcasm was fired at the impassive Scriven by drivers of 'buses more regular and less philanthropically inclined. He received them all with the most imperturbable good humour, and a knowing use of some of the strange little Masonic signs of the fraternity which his keen eye had picked up during his preliminary survey of the course, and thereby furnished them with infinite cause for wonderment.

On the third morning, our regular first passenger, whom Dudley had affectionately dubbed "My Queen," had barely time to take her seat, and to blushing and diffidently accept a long curiously-shaped bottle of old English lavender water, which was that day's present, before the 'bus was filled inside and out by a bevy of highly delighted maidens, who giggled and chattered so, when their bottles were courteously handed to them, that by closing my eyes I could almost imagine myself in the parrot-house at the

Zoo. I was the only mere man on board, and whenever they looked at me they seemed somehow to think the situation very much funnier than it appeared to myself. There seemed more of the fair sex about the streets than I had ever noticed at that time of day before. There seemed a perfect procession of them journeying townwards. Wyllie

believed that now he had got to the root of the mystery.

Most of our fair riders stuck to their seats all the way there and all the way back, and thanked Dudley very prettily as they descended and shook themselves out. They were, every one of them, wild to know what it all meant, but all they could get out of Dudley, who was enjoying himself most thoroughly, was: "Company's orders, miss"; and when they tried further to learn what or who the company was, a mysterious "Ah!" went but a very little way towards satisfying the inordinate cravings of their curiosity.

Next day was scented soap day, and the provision of the neat little boxes of exquisite soap, without any name whatever on either soap or box, had given Master Dudley more trouble than all the rest of the little tokens put together. The very idea of soap somehow suggested advertisement, and not one of the recipients but believed, when the box was handed to them, that here at last was the key to the puzzle.

One or two amusing things happened on the fourth day of the run. When "My Queen" got out at Hyde Park Corner a man swung himself in and took her place. I knew at a glance that he was a professional bus-conductor, come to spy out the land, and I watched him with interest.

Dudley presented him with his box of soap, and he held it and looked at it as if it might contain dynamite.

"Say, mister, wot's this?"

"Soap," said Dudley.

"Soap!" said the man. "Ho! Wat yer giving us? Wat do I want wiv a box of soap?"

Dudley shook his head to intimate that whatever he might think wild horses should not tear any expression of opinion out of him.

"Whose soap is it?" asked the man.

"Yours," said Dudley, and the other began carefully tearing off the outer wrappings of the box and examining every scrap of the paper to see where the advertisement came in. Every eye in the bus was fixed upon him. They were all aching with curiosity to find out the same thing, but no one had cared to tackle the question on the spot in this bare-faced fashion.

He examined the box inside and out. He took out each piece of soap separately, and examined it minutely. He held it up to the



"THE BUS WAS FILLED INSIDE AND OUT."

explained afterwards that they were all waiting for the bus, either actually standing and waiting or walking to meet it; but that as soon as they saw that every seat was taken, they all did their best to pretend it was something else they had been on the look-out for, and mostly turned and walked away without another glance at the bus and their more fortunate sisters.

When we reached the old gentleman's corner he was standing there waiting for us, and seeing the state of the case he said: "Bless my soul!" and shook his umbrella at us. Dudley, however, dropped off and presented him with a bottle of scent, and we left him carefully examining it, under the

light, and looked through it. He smelt it. I half thought he was going to taste it. Then he looked round at the eager, watching eyes with a puzzled, pensive look on his face, and said, "Well, I'm dummed! there ain't nary sign of advertysement 'bout it. Say, you—you in the tan kids, what you doin' this for? Where does it come in? Blamed if I can see."

"Sorry!" said Dudley, suavely.

"Is't a new line yer a-pioneering wi' that blamed little spotty, stripy flag, or what is it?"

But Dudley only closed one eye, and regarded him steadily with the other, and at last the opposition took himself off.

That day, too, the fame of us having spread far and wide, a reporter for a lively evening paper boarded us, and exercised belligerent rights of search for contraband of war or anything which would work up into a humorous half-column article. But we tumbled to him at once, and to the intense amusement of our other passengers, the officials of the 'bus were suddenly stricken deaf and dumb. The exigent packet of soap was pressed upon the importunate man of many questions, but no single word in reply could he extract from either driver or conductor. He travelled all the way to Liverpool Street—where, in hopes of a loosening of tongues, he accepted a whisky-and-soda—and back to Fleet Street, where he descended with facts enough from his own observation for a racy article, which duly appeared next day, but without one solitary scrap of information as to the why and wherefore of things.

While he was energetically trying to pump Scriven up on deck, Dudley was busy with the frequently-moistened stub of a very black pencil down below, and presently he climbed the stairs and pinned on to the driver's back the following notice:—

"Please don't speak to the man at the reins, or he'll run into something and capsize the show."

"Well, you're the funniest lot I ever came across," was the reporter's valediction as he skipped off the 'bus, with his box of soap in his pocket.

Thereupon Dudley drawled, "Thanks, so much! So glad to have made your acquaintance!" and tendered him another box of soap, which he declined with language.

That night at dinner Miss Van Toller, in her conversation with Scriven, was full to overflowing of the subject of the 'Bus. She had heard about it from a friend of hers who had ridden on it and been given a bottle of scent the day before, and she was just wild to meet that 'bus and ride on it.

"No one knows what on earth it all means," she said, "but the men who are running it are elegantly dressed and really quite gentlemanly in manner and appearance. They don't take any fares, and they give some new thing away every day to every passenger. It's just immense, and I'm just dying to find out all about it. Now, won't you take me on that 'bus on Saturday, Mr. Scriven? If you don't promise, I shall begin to think that you are the most disobliging man I ever met. I'm aching to go up to the top of St. Paul's, and you won't take me. I'm dying to go on this funny 'bus, and you won't take me. I don't think I shall ever ask you to do another thing for me as long as I live."

"Boys!" said Scriven, when we had settled down in the smoking-room, "we've got to stop this. When Mam—when Miss Van Toller wants to get on to that 'bus, I'm off it. To-morrow must be the last day of the fun, and on Saturday I'll take Miss Van Toller out to hunt up the 'bus that will not come.



"I'M DYING TO GO ON THIS FUNNY 'BUS, AND YOU WON'T TAKE ME."

It's pretty well worked out, anyhow. There's no reason that I know of why Rupert Scriven should mortgage the whole of his bright and golden future even for the sake of Dudley K.'s great idea. If this 'bus runs on Saturday, Oxenham here or Wyllie will have to steer it."

We hastily disclaimed any slightest wish to pilfer one single leaf from his laurels, and Scriven smiled knowingly and said:—

"Oh, well, I've had enough of it. I've shown you fellows that an American can drive a team in London without absolutely wrecking the City, and I'm free to confess there's not much play about it. It's deuced hard work, and the man who says it isn't has never tried it.

"Nice kind of fool I would look," he went on, after a few minutes of smoky meditation, "if Poppa Van Toller heard I was driving stage in London."

"H'mph!" grunted Dudley K., from the depths of his lounging chair, "drove stage himself in New York once upon a time, did old Van, and glad to get doing it."

"He does not refer to it, my boy. He has the smallest sense of humour and the biggest head for dollar-making of any man I know. Maybe the two things don't run together."

"That's so," murmured Dudley, as one who knew of his own experience.

As the Benevolent 'Bus evidently could not run without a driver, and as Scriven flatly refused to drive it on the Saturday, having pledged himself to go with Miss Van Toller to hunt it up on that day, it was decided that Friday's run should be the last.

For that day Dudley's gifts had taken the form of an exceedingly neat little carved ivory paper-knife, each one engraved with the Wauters' crest—a Croton water-bug—and their family motto, "Creep on"; and, for the final outburst, he had provided a quantity of the very pretty little silken Stars and Stripes, similar to the one which he had nailed to the forepeak of the 'bus. He decided, therefore, to make a clearance by giving every passenger on Friday two presents instead of one, and the satisfaction and mystification which resulted almost reconciled him to the loss of the Saturday's run.

The most amusing feature of Friday's doings, in addition to the regular features, which were, if anything, more amusing than ever, was the fact that nearly every 'bus we met had a small American flag flying at its little mast-head. But, whereas our passengers were solid chunks of mystified enjoyment, and every face was beaming like a rose, the

faces of the passengers on the other 'buses were dour and gloomy, and they eyed us as we passed with mingled looks of disappointment and curiosity. They scanned our 'bus very closely to see wherein it differed from theirs. The only difference was that ours was the genuine original Benevolent 'Bus, and theirs was not. So marked were their disappointment and their curiosity, that our passengers came at last to roar with delight whenever another 'bus flying the Stars and Stripes came in sight, and this did not make the passengers on the other 'bus enjoy themselves any more than they were doing. I believe, indeed, that this sailing under false colours led to some very lively, not to say heated, displays of temper on the part of the deluded passengers, who, as a rule, absolutely refused to pay any fares whatever, and roundly accused their conductors of annexing for their own benefit the gifts which they supposed should have come to them. But for that we could hardly be held responsible.

At six o'clock we drove the Benevolent 'Bus home to its stable for the last time, hauled down the flag, settled with its delighted owner, and took a couple of hansoms back to our hotel.

On Saturday evening, at dinner, Miss Mamie Van Toller energetically expressed her opinion that it was all flim-flam about that 'bus that took no fares and gave away presents.

"They told us it carried an American flag," she said, somewhat heatedly, "and we got on five different 'buses——"

"Six," said Scriven, with gusto.

"Six, was it?—well, I got mad and lost count, and we had to pay our fares on every one of them, and they gave us nothing but a ticket with a hole in it and a pill advertisement on the back, and the men were not gentlemen at all—just ordinary, common conductors, and very rude too, most of them. What was it that last one said, Rup—Mr. Scriven?"

"He said it was as much as he could do to support his mother-in-law and eight small children, without giving anything away," said Scriven, with a slight accession of colour.

"And to make up for the disappointing time we've had, Rup—Mr. Scriven has promised to take me up the dome of St. Paul's on Monday," beamed Miss Van Toller.

Scriven looked sheepishly into his plate, and as he did not immediately follow us to the smoking-room that night, we opined among ourselves that the Benevolent 'Bus had led him into clover.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE Lobby does not yet look "TOM" itself, lacking the cheery, bustling presence of poor Tom Ellis. It is a significant peculiarity, shared with very few members, that the late Liberal Whip was always spoken of by the diminutive of his Christian name. Another Whip, also like Lydians and Tom Ellis, dead ere his prime, won the distinction. Through the angriest days of Mr. Parnell's ruthless campaign against the dignity of Parliament and the stability of its ancient institutions, his cheery, warm-hearted, mirth-loving Whip was always "Dick" Power. To-day we happily still have with us Sir Robert Threshie Reid, Q.C., sometime Solicitor-General, later Attorney-General, in the House of Commons always "Bob" Reid. These two instances show the kind of man the House delights to honour by this rare mark of friendly feeling.

A DARING EXPERIMENT. It was a bold stroke on the part of Lord Rosebery, at the time Prime Minister, to promote the member for Merionethshire to the post of Chief Ministerial Whip on the submergence of Mr. Marjoribanks in the House of Lords. With Liberals only less exclusively than with the Conservative party, it has, from time immemorial, been the custom to appoint as Chief Whip a scion of the peerage, or a commoner sanctified by connection with an old county family. Tom Ellis had neither call to the high position. His father was a tenant farmer. He himself was a Welsh member, having neither social standing nor pecuniary resources. To make such a man what is still known by the ancient style of Patronage Secretary was a bold experiment. That even at the outset it was not resented by the party is a striking tribute to Tom Ellis's character.

It would not be true to say that, in private conversation, heads were not shaken, and that tongues did not wag apprehension that the thing would never do. The new Whip speedily lived down these not unnatural and scarcely ill-natured doubts. He had a sweet

serenity of temper impervious to pin-pricks, a sunny nature before which spite thawed. It was an immense lift for a young, obscure Welsh member at a bound to be made the confidant of Cabinet Ministers, the trusted agent and instrument of the most powerful governing body in the world. It did not

even begin to spoil him. There was no difference between Tom Ellis, member for Merionethshire, and Tom Ellis, Chief Ministerial Whip, except perhaps that the latter was more diffident in his demeanour, a shade nearer being deferential in his intercourse with fellow-members. His most marked failing was his extreme modesty, a unique default in a Parliamentary Whip. It did not, however, cover weakness of will or

hesitancy when he heard the call of duty. He was genuinely sorry if any particular course for the adoption or the carrying out of which he was responsible hurt anybody's feelings, or did not fully accord with one's material interests. If a thing had to be done, it was got through, smilingly, gently, but firmly.

Tom Ellis was so unassuming in manner, so persistently deprecatory of his own claims to thanks or approval, that his great capacity was often underestimated. Alike in the House of Commons and in Parliament Street we have time now to sum it up at its real value.

LORD SALISBURY'S MEMORY. The Prime Minister rarely takes notes as a preliminary to taking part in a debate. Among many instances of this habit I well remember his speech on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill in the Session of 1893. He sat out the course of long and, on the first night, dreary speaking in his familiar attitude, with head bowed, legs crossed, the right one persistently shaken in fashion tending to drive mad neighbours of nervous habit. He did not as he listened take a single note. When at ten o'clock on the second night of the debate he stood at the table, he laid upon it a square of paper



TOM ELLIS.

about the size of an ordinary envelope. This presumably contained the notes of his speech brought down from his study. If so, they were almost entirely ignored. He went steadily on, his speech a stately river of perfectly-turned phrases. He omitted no point in the argument of speakers in favour of the Bill, and more than once quoted them textually.

That, a by no means infrequent occurrence, is the chiefest marvel. Debaters most chary of note-taking invariably write down the very words of an earlier speaker when they intend to cite them in support of their argument. A sentence that strikes Lord Salisbury is burnt in upon his memory. When the proper moment comes he quotes it without lapsing into paraphrase.

A colleague of the Premier's tells me he once spoke to him admiringly of this wonderful gift. Lord Salisbury explained that he adopted the habit from necessity rather than from choice. He felt hopelessly hampered with written notes, often finding difficulty in reading them. Feeling the necessity of mastering the precise turns of particular phrases as they dropped from the lips of a debater, he gives himself up to the task, and rarely finds himself at fault.

Mr. Arthur Balfour in lesser degree shares his uncle's gift of precise memory. When, as happened this Session, he has to expound an intricate measure like the London Government Bill, he provides himself with sheafs of notes, and his speech suffers in perspicacity accordingly. That laboriously prepared effort was his one failure of the Session. As a rule he is exceedingly frugal in the matter of note-taking. More frequently than

otherwise he speaks without the assistance of notes. Like Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and all Parliamentary debaters of the first rank, he is at his best when, suddenly called upon, he plunges into chance debate.

Sir William Harcourt is a voluminous note-taker, his big, as distinguished from his great, speeches being almost entirely read from an appalling pile of manuscript. Mr. Chamberlain rarely trusts himself in sea of debate without the bladder of notes. But they are not extended. A sheet of note-paper usually serves for their setting forth.

The new
LORD Viceroy of
MAYO. India was-
more fortunate

in the attitude of public opinion towards his appointment than was a predecessor nominated exactly thirty years earlier. When Mr. Disraeli

made Lord Mayo Governor-General of India, the announcement was hailed with a storm of opprobrium from newspapers not marshalled solely on the Opposition side. The Viceroy-designate was chiefly known to the House of Commons and the public by a once-famous, now forgotten, speech, delivered in the spring of 1868. John Francis Maguire, forerunner of the Parnellite organization, submitted a series of resolutions on the condition of Ireland.

In the course of his speech he dwelt upon the evil effects wrought to his country by the existence of the Irish Church. That was the burning question of the hour. A month later, Mr. Gladstone's Resolution decreeing the disestablishment of the Church was carried in the teeth of the Ministry by a large majority. It was known that the pending General Election would turn upon the issue. Lord Mayo, at the time Irish Secretary, was put up to answer Mr. Maguire.



"SETTING OUT A DEBATE."



"MR. CHAMBERLAIN TAKES A NOTE."

There are some (exceedingly few) members of the present House who recall the speech and the scene. For four hours the Irish Secretary floundered along. Just as he seemed to be collapsing from physical exhaustion, shared by his audience, he pulled himself together and spluttered out a sentence that instantly agitated the House. Mr. Maguire had denounced the Church Establishment as a scandalous and monstrous anomaly. The Irish Secretary, hinting at a scheme for making all religious denominations in Ireland happy without sacrificing the Established Church, talked about "levelling up, not levelling down."

The phrase was instantly recognised as coming from the mint of the Mystery Monger sitting with bowed head and folded arms on the Treasury Bench. What did it mean? Was Dizzy going to dish Gladstone by dealing with the Irish Church question before the enemy got the chance? No one off the Treasury Bench ever knew. Some day the mystery may be unravelled. Up to this time Lord Mayo fills the position of

Him who left half-told

The story of Cambescan bold.

On the last day of July in the same year Parliament was dissolved, and within a week it was whispered that Lord Mayo was to be the new Governor-General of India. Exile seemed a just punishment for a four hours' speech murmured before a hapless House of Commons. But there was a general impression that this kind of exile was, in the circumstances, too splendid.

One of Lord Mayo's intimate "MANY A friends who saw him off on SLIP," his journey to India tells me a curious incident illustrative of the situation. Expressing hope of some time looking in to see the Viceroy at Calcutta, or Simla, Lord Mayo said: "You may see me again much sooner than that. I should not be a bit surprised if, when I get to Suez, I find a telegram recalling me."

Since his appointment, and pending his departure, Mr. Gladstone had been returned by a majority that placed him in a position of autocratic supremacy. There was, unquestionably, something out of the way in the haste with which the fallen Government had filled up the greatest prize at their disposal. There was at the time no question of the possibility of Lord Derby's Administration being reinstated. As my friend (a Conservative member of the last Parliament elected under the Reform Bill of 1832) put it, "Defeated about twice a week in the

House of Commons, going to certain doom in the country, Dizzy pitchforked Mayo on to the Viceregal throne." It would have been a strong course to recall him, but the circumstances were unprecedented. Certainly Lord Mayo did not feel safe till he had passed Suez, going forward on a journey which, three years later, the assassin's knife ended on the Andaman Islands. Meanwhile, "Dizzy's dark horse" had come in the first flight in the race for enduring fame among Indian Viceroy.

In 1816 Sir Robert Peel, then Chief Secretary, wrote: "I believe MANY DAYS an honest despotic government would be by far the fittest government for Ireland." Sixteen years later Lord Althorpe, another statesman not prone to form a rash opinion, wrote to Lord Grey: "If I had my way I would establish a dictatorship in Ireland."

The Irish members complain that what was refused to Peel, to Althorpe, and to a long list of statesmen directly concerned for the government of Ireland has been granted to so mild a mannered man as Mr. Gerald Balfour. His appearance is certainly out of keeping with the part. But, as the Irish members found one Friday night this Session, when Mr. Davitt brought up the case of distress in Ireland, within the Chief Secretary's fragile frame, behind his almost maidenly reserve, glow embers of a fire that can, upon occasion, be fanned into furious flame.

An ancient House of Commons' PEERS and tradition tells how the Speaker ELECTIONS of the day, having solemnly threatened a member that he would "name him" if he did not refrain from disorderly conduct, was asked what would follow on the proceeding. "The Lord only knows," responded the Speaker.



"THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S FRAGILE FRAME."

Early in the present Session there came to the front two other examples of consecrated cryptic doom. At the opening of every Session the Speaker, amid a buzz of conversation among reunited members, reads a series of Standing Orders. One forbids any peer of Parliament to concern himself in the election of members to the House of Commons. For generations this formula has passed unchallenged. The peers have been solemnly warned off, have received the injunction in submissive silence, and (some of them) have taken the earliest opportunity of disregarding it.

It is a frailty of the human mind that repetition blunts its power of discrimination. Hearing this Order read Session after Session, old members grow so accustomed to the rhythm of its sentences that their purport passes unheeded. Young members make no move, not because they lack presumption, but because they believe that what has been so long endured must necessarily be right.

It needed a man of the mental and physical youth of Mr. James Lowther to put his finger on this anomaly. This Session, as in one or two of its predecessors, he has moved to expunge the Standing Order from the catalogue. He has shown, and no one has disputed the fact, that in spite of its pompous assumption of authority the rule is absolutely impotent. If a peer pleases to violate the ordinance the House of Commons has absolutely no power to enforce it. With an ordinary business assembly that would suffice to make an end of the absurdity. The conservatism of the House of Commons in respect of its own procedure is deeply rooted. Mr. Lowther's motion was rejected by a considerable majority, and next Session, as through the ages, this *brutum fulmen* will be hurled from the Speaker's Chair.



"MENTAL AND PHYSICAL YOUTH"—MR. JAMES LOWTHER

DOGBERRY
AND THE
HOUSE OF
COMMONS'
WATCH.

The analogous anomaly that cropped up in debate was the position of truant members of Select Committees. Members are nominated to the Committee on a private Bill by a body called the Committee of Selection, over which, for just a quarter of a century, Sir John Mowbray presided. Committee-men are expected to attend the various sittings. If they do not, the Chairman reports the delinquents to the

House, and a formal motion is made, that the errant member "do attend the said Committee at half-past eleven to-morrow."

That is plain sailing. "You shall comprehend all vagrom men," said Dogberry, in his charge to the watch. "You are to bid any man stand in the Prince's name." "How if he will not stand?" the shrewd watchman inquired. That is a question that occurs to the mind in connection with the rules governing the attendance of members on private Committees. The House of Commons has met the difficulty by unconsciously adopting Dogberry's ruling. "Why, then," the sublime City officer answered to the watchman's poser, "take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave."

Of late Sessions the House, sensible of the false position it was placed in by this procedure, has varied it. Instead of the formal injunction that used to appear on the votes commanding the attendance of the peccant member, the report is simply ordered to lie on the Table, and thus the House is thankfully rid of a knave.

ALL THE
DIFFER-
ENCE.

A very proper distinction in this matter is made between the sacred persons of members of the House and mere citizens. It sometimes happens that a busy man summoned to give evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons fails to obey the summons.

Then doth the thunder roll and the lightning flash. The Chairman hurries off to tell the shameful story to the shocked House. A peremptory order is

issued for the attendance of the recalcitrant witness, and the Serjeant-at-Arms is instructed to see that it be obeyed. A communication by post, or by messenger if the witness reside within the Metropolitan area, usually brings him up to the scratch at the appointed place and hour. If he pushes resistance to extreme the Serjeant-at-Arms will go and fetch him *vi et armis*. He will be brought to the Bar of the House and committed to the Clock Tower till purged of his contumacy.

DEMA-
GOGUES IN
THE HOUSE
DR.
KENEALY.

In "Mr. Gregory's Letter Box," being the correspondence of the Right Hon. Wm. Gregory from 1813 to 1835, he during the greater part of that time being Under Secretary for Ireland, there is quoted a striking sentence from Canning. "I have never," he said, "seen a demagogue who did not shrink to his proper dimensions after six months of Parliamentary life."

This acute observation remains as true to-day as it was in the earlier Parliaments Canning adorned and occasionally dominated. Two modern instances suffice to prove the case. When, in 1875, Dr. Kenealy entered the House, triumphantly returned by the men of Stoke, he was an undoubted power in the land. I remember Mr. Adam, then Opposition Whip, showing me an appalling list of constituencies, some held by Liberals, others by Conservatives, common in the peculiarity that if a vacancy occurred the next day Kenealy could return his nominee. He was conscious of his power, and meant to make the House of Commons feel its influence. The crowded benches that attended his utterances furnished flattering testimony to his power and the interest excited by his personality.

DEWDROPS
ON THE
LION'S
MANE.

On the occasion of his first appearance, the House was filled as it had not been since critical divisions on the Irish Land Bill, or the Irish Church Bill, of the preceding Parliament. Amongst the spectators from the galleries over the clock were the Prince of Wales, Prince Christian, and the ex-King of Naples, at the time a visitor to London. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, at the safe distance of the Isle of Wight, had been saying something about Kenealy,



"THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS WILL GO AND
FETCH HIM."

who made it a question of privilege. In this speech was set that gem of oratory remembered long after the rest is forgotten. "Of one thing I am certain," said Kenealy, in deep chest-notes, wagging his head and his forefinger, as through many days of the

Tichborne trial they had been wagged at hostile witnesses and an unsympathetic judge, "that the calumnious reflections thrown on my character will recoil on their authors. As for me, I shake them off as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane."

Before his first Session closed, Kenealy flickered out like a damp torch. He tried again and again to obtain a footing in the House. Without being rudely repelled he was set back, and long before the Parliament ran its course he became a nonentity.

Mr. Keir Hardie, a man on an infinitely lower plane than Kenealy, who, after all, was a consummate scholar and displayed occasional flashes of genius, is a later illustration of the truth of Canning's axiom. He came in in 1892 as member for West Ham, numbered among the narrow majority of

forty that placed Mr. Gladstone in precarious power. From the first he made it clear that he was no hack—like Mr. Burt, for example—but would let bloated patricians know that the working man is their master. To that end he wore the Cap of Liberty, of somewhat dingy, weather-worn cloth. Also he sported a short jacket, a pair of trousers frayed at the heel, a flannel shirt of dubious colour, and a shock of uncombed hair. On the day of the opening of Parliament he drove up to Westminster in a break, accompanied by a brass band. His first check was received at the hands of the police, who refused to allow the



"ENTER MR. KEIR HARDIE."

musical party to drive into Palace Yard. So the new member was fain to walk.

His appearance on the scene kindled keen anticipation in the breast of Lord Randolph Churchill, who saw in him a dangerous element in the Ministerial majority. The member for West Ham did his best to justify that expectation. At the outset the House listened to him with its inbred courtesy and habitual desire to allow every member, however personally inconsiderable, full freedom of speech. It soon found out that Mr. Keir Hardie was as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. His principal effort to justify his appearance on the Parliamentary stage was a motion made in his second Session to discuss the widespread destitution among members of the working classes. He rose after questions, claiming to have the matter discussed as one of urgent public importance. When the Speaker asked if he were supported by the statutory number of forty, only thirty-six rose. The bulk of members, not unmindful of the prevalent condition of the working man or unwilling to help him, did not care to march under Mr. Keir Hardie's flag. His six months of probation were over, and he had shrunk to his proper dimensions.

When the dissolution came he, almost unobserved, sank below the Parliamentary horizon.

The baths recently added to the luxuries of the House of Commons have been so much appreciated, that there is prospect of necessity for extension. The accommodation is certainly poverty-stricken, compared with that at the

debate there is a great run on the bath-room, it being at Washington the legislative habit to take a bath preliminary to delivery of an oration.

In addition to ordinary hot and cold baths there is a Russian steam bath. I never saw



"A RUSSIAN BATH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS."

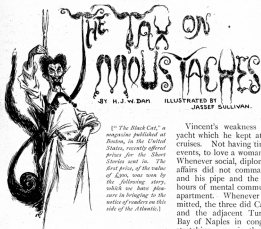


"NEXT MR. KEIR HARDIE."

disposal of denizens of the Capitol at Washington. The baths that serve America's legislators are luxuriously fitted below the basement, approach being gained by a service of lifts. Each marble tank is set in a roomy chamber, furnished with every appliance of the dressing-room. During the progress of an important

the like in England. The operation commences in a small, windowless room, which has for sole furniture a wooden bench, coils of steam-pipes garlanding the walls. When the door is shut and the steam turned on the hon. member gasps in a temperature as hot as he is likely to experience in this stage of existence. When he is parboiled he goes through a cooling process, beginning with a tub of hot water and on through a succession, the temperature gradually decreasing.

This process occupies an hour and a half, and is obviously not a luxury to be indulged in when an important division is expected. It is recommended as admirable for rheumatic cases, infallible for a cold. It might be tried in the House of Commons should it be decided to extend the bathing accommodation.



["The Black Cat," a magazine published at Boston, in the United States, recently offered prizes for the Short Stories sent in. The first prize, of the value of £500, was won by the following story, which we have pleasure in bringing to the notice of readers on this side of the Atlantic.]



HE rivalry between Vincent and Halladay was bitter enough before Miss Belmayne appeared. It then assumed an aspect almost Corsican.

Vincent was the Rome correspondent of the *London Thunderer*. Halladay was the Roman representative of the *London National*. Vincent was an Oxford man; Halladay's intellectual credentials were dated at Cambridge. Vincent was of middle height, dark, lithe, and athletic. He had an electric energy, and quick, penetrating brown eyes, with a merry light in them that was attractive; also a brown moustache that approached the feminine ideal. Halladay was of stouter and flabbier build, with a blonde, sharp-pointed beard, and a face like Lord Salisbury's. Lord Salisbury was, in fact, secretly his model. He was the cousin of a peer, but notwithstanding this drawback had managed to develop a value of his own, which shows his great force and determination. He was also five years older than Vincent, who was only thirty-one; and in the game of life, if not of love, years have a distinct value of their own. Both men drew lavish salaries, moved in the highest society of Rome, and were polished carpet cavaliers and very popular. Both, too, had weaknesses which revealed their temperaments and are correlated forces in this narrative.

Vincent's weakness was a small sloop yacht which he kept at Naples for vacation cruises. Not having time, in the pressure of events, to love a woman, he loved his yacht. Whenever social, diplomatic, or international affairs did not command his attention, he and his pipe and the yacht had charming hours of mental communion together in his apartment. Whenever leave of absence permitted, the three did Capri, Sorrento, Ischia, and the adjacent Turner paintings of the Bay of Naples in congenial company. On stretching seas, in the calm and gorgeous afterglow, he dreamed of a possible fair one in the nebulous future. This showed his temperament to be romantic.

Halladay's weakness was "The War Cloud in the Balkans." Whenever other news failed he would knit his editorial brow and use his portentous ink and see ominous signs of trouble in Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Balkan Provinces. One can always see ominous signs of trouble in Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Balkan Provinces, and they make an excellent frame on which to hang long and sweeping periods dealing with possible international complications. From which it will be seen that Halladay was ambitious. He always used the most majestic polysyllables that fitted, and these won him the reputation of a powerful and far-seeing correspondent, which reputation he confidently believed that he deserved.

These diverse temperaments caused the two men to secretly scorn each other, and this feeling was not diminished by their alternating newspaper triumphs, important bits of news from the Quirinal or the Ministries, which fell now to one and now to the other, and caused the usual variations of anger and delight.

Thus it was when Miss Belmayne and her parents arrived at the Grand Hotel for the winter. Parents are, of course, of no importance, but it may be mentioned that Mr. Belmayne had made stoves, and incidentally

accumulated two millions, on the shore of Lake Michigan. Miss Belmayne was one of those girls who, without effort, bowl over unprepared Englishmen like ten-pins. She had style, Paris style, and this, when the dressmaker is driven with an intelligent curb, is very fascinating. She was fairly tall, blonde, had ideas, dark-blue eyes, and a frank, sympathetic nature. All these exercised a novel and powerful influence on the two men. They met her on the same evening at a diplomatic reception. The charms mentioned were quite enough for Vincent. He went home, lighted his pipe, put on his slippers, looked at the fire, and said, "By Jove!" He said nothing more to the fire or anything else for two mortal hours. Then he said "By Jove!" again and went to bed. The same charms sufficed to stagger Halladay, but to them he added the two millions. He was older and more practical. He wrote his cousin the peer and told him to be sure to come to Rome that winter. Then he mentally watered his genealogical tree, resolved to lay siege to the beautiful Vicksburg with the firm patience of a Grant, and absently took a cold bath. This chilled him, at midnight, but did not check his ardour.

Miss Belmayne took Rome and the Forum and the Coliseum very seriously. This was a novelty to Vincent and Halladay, so they awoke to its grandeur, and took it very seriously indeed. They sent her books, and bronzes, and prehistoric pavements, and fragments of ancient palaces by the cartload. Papa Belmayne, who was indulgent, said he didn't particularly care for a macadamized drawing-room, and engaged another room to hold the ancient architecture. The attentions of the two men soon became constant and very marked. And through archaeological mornings and afternoon drives, on the blocks of the Forum and the steps of the Coliseum, on the Pincian Hill and the roof of St.

Peter's, they fell deeper and deeper in love, but kept their own counsel. The dear girl was as yet unconscious of it, but they hated each other with the hate of the 1850-60 dramas. It was anything—all—to win the adorable beauty and sentence the other fellow to life-long despair.

The primal cause of all the subsequent trouble was Vincent's yacht. He had, on various occasions, shown Miss Belmayne the high responsibility of his position as correspondent of the *Thunderer*. Now and then he wrote his despatches at her hotel, after dinner, and two days later would read

her the powerful, ponderous *Thunderer* editorials, which, telegraphed all over Europe, were based upon the despatches sent by him. This interested her tremendously. Like every true American girl of nowadays—in her ante-matrimonial, ante-babies-of-her-own-period—she secretly longed to sway nations. To write despatches which set Europe and America in a ferment, which caused Salisbury, the German Emperor, and the Czar to instantly buckle on their skates, as it were, and dash off to do something final, seemed to her the only occupation worthy of woman or of man. She found

nothing so delightful as helping him, and he knew nothing so delightful as her help, notwithstanding that the hotel note-paper was scarcely the proper stationery to bear this freight of heavy thought. When the *Thunderer* arrived she would read the despatches with a thrill of interest born of her indirect connection with the great newspaper. Finally she wanted to write a despatch—just a little one—all by herself. He, reserving rights of correction and revision, consented. It was a safe contribution, not at all sensational, about the returns of the olive crop. She wrote it. She also read it, word for word, in print two days later. That experience was a crisis in her life. Destiny opened out its arms to her as a woman of might and power. Halladay lost ground visibly after that, and



MISS BELMAYNE.

had emotional neuralgia of the most torturing kind.

The cause of the trouble, as before stated, was the yacht. A dirty steam trader from Marseilles, while coming to anchor, had taken off the bowsprit of Vincent's secondary idol, together with a large slice of her peerless nose. It was like an accident to a highly esteemed female cousin. The best medical attention was instantly necessary. Vincent knew the Italians. He knew that, if he did not personally arrange the contract for repairs at Naples, the contractor who did them would afterwards own the yacht, bring suit against his personal fortune, and hold his family responsible for the balance of the money. In short, he had to go to Naples for two days. Miss Belmayne, strange to say, received the news with joy.

"I'll look after things. I'll send anything that's necessary to the *Thunderer*," she said.

He stared at her in astonishment.

"Oh, do let me! Please do! I want to show you the breadth of my mind."

Events were very dull, journalistically. And when a beautiful girl wants to show you the breadth of her mind it is not only dangerous to say "No," but wise to say "Yes," that is, if you are as much in love as he was. He finally consented and she radiated enthusiasm. "Just read the papers if you do send anything, and be guided by them," said he. "But don't—er—don't send too much, and nothing that isn't important." Then he went away to single combat with the contractor. She couldn't do him any harm. If what she sent was bad it wouldn't be printed. And his consent to the proposal would certainly do him infinite good in connection with another proposal. Thus he mused, in love, and in the train to Naples.

Now, it is doubtless fully understood by all adult persons that when an American girl desires to show the breadth of her mind she is destined to show it at all hazards. The responsibility of her position weighed heavily upon Miss Belmayne. She came down to

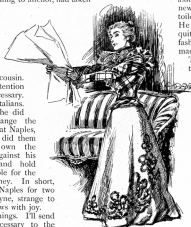
breakfast next morning with a far-away look in her eyes and two brown prima-donna hair-curlers still nestling in the soft silken hair above her forehead. Papa Belmayne at first assumed that this was a new style in breakfast toilets, and said nothing. He could never keep quite abreast of the fashions, and he had made mistakes before.

Then he conceived that it might possibly be an evidence of strong, disturbing emotion, and ventured to inquire. She gravely removed the hair-curlers, and after striking her hair three skilful taps put them in her pocket. Then she cautiously whispered to him the news. She, SHE, was the Acting Rome Correspondent of the *Thunderer*! Papa was startled.

It flashed instantly upon his practical Chicago mind that with a wire like that something might be done in wheat. But, no—on second thought—that wouldn't do. Still, he was proud, very proud, of his daughter. He proceeded to like Vincent amazingly.

"We'll give the old *Thunderer* a lift, my dear, if anything happens. I'll furnish the statesmanship and you look out for the spelling and punctuation," said he. Halladay he had never liked. That gentleman's family tree and its luxuriant foliage had been exhibited several times in his presence, and it annoyed him. Not having dealt largely in trees in his career, he didn't believe in them. So Vincent stock rose clear above the hundred mark in the Belmayne family, and Halladays fell steadily to zero, with no offers.

Halladay knew this and fumed in secret. He also guessed at once from Miss Belmayne's words and questions the foolish thing that Vincent had done. He saw in it not only a clever move of his rival, but also an opportunity to spoil Vincent's chances and win Miss Belmayne with a single safe play.



"SHE WOULD READ THE DISPATCHES."

He was devoted but thoughtful all that afternoon. Then he went away and meditated.

At ten that evening he entered the Belmayne drawing-room, sharp-pointed, immaculate, and smiling with a visible air of conscious triumph.

"Ha, ha, ha! Sorry for Vincent. Pity he's away," he said.

"Oh, what has happened? I've read all the evening papers," said the Acting Correspondent.

"Can't say, you know. Must keep a good thing to myself when I get it."

"Is it a very good thing?"

"Very."

"Is it a *big* thing?" This with fear and trembling.

"Biggest in months. May cause a rebellion in Italy. You know these Italians. Hair-trigger sort of people when anything happens that they don't quite like."

"Oh, Mr. Halladay, please tell me!"

He proceeded not to tell her, for the next half-hour, in the cleverest way possible. He dangled the bait before her and cruelly enjoyed her attempts to seize it. He saw with concealed fury, however, that her anxiety was the tender anxiety that he most greatly feared. This armed him in his resolve, and having excited her curiosity till it was painful, he went downstairs.

"What is it, my dear?" said Belmayne.

Miss Belmayne was dumb with disappointment. She loved Vincent—she knew it in that moment—and he would be dreadfully beaten, without excuse, and perhaps lose his position. Because of their compact he had even failed to notify the *Thunderer* of his absence.

"I've missed the greatest news of the year," she said, sharply. "Do go down to the smoking-room. They're sure to be talking about it. Follow Halladay, and see to whom he speaks. We *must* get something about it."

Papa Belmayne was stout, vigorous, fifty-five, and came from Chicago. His hair was curly and showed only a few white lines.

Spurred by parental love and a desire for something to do that was slowly undermining his constitution, he followed Halladay like the species of hound which is called sleuth. His eyes twinkled and his blood was up. He had always known that anybody can be a newspaper correspondent, and he enjoyed trying it. He quickly found Halladay in the smoking-room and kept his eye on him. Halladay observed this and was deeply glad. It was as he had hoped. Belmayne had fallen heels over head into his trap.

Halladay was in earnest, low-toned conversation with Sir George Perleybore, a tall, thin, white-haired, perfectly groomed baronet, of any age above sixty-five, the kind of lay figure met everywhere in the best hotels of the south of Europe during winter. Sir George was astonished. Papa Belmayne saw this plainly, and lay low like Brer Rabbit. Halladay finally went away. Papa then greeted Sir George carelessly and proposed a whisky - and - soda. Also cigars. Sir George said:

"Most extraordinary! Wouldn't have believed it. What'll these beggars do next?" Papa swelled with repressed eagerness. Then it all came out. He got it—every word of it—and chuckled at his own diplomacy.

Then he flew to the elevator.

"Now I know what I'm talking about, my dear," he said, when her burst of joy was over. "I understand these things and you don't. I haven't been a State senator two terms for nothing. You sit down and take your pen and I'll dictate."

Papa expanded like a balloon, walked the floor, and dictated. He measured every word by cubic measurement. He dictated the short despatch four times and half of another time in all. She wrote and scratched out and turned the dictionary pages feverishly, and thought how clearly Edward would see the breadth of her mind.

And neither Edward nor the *Thunderer* knew the doom that was impending.

When the despatch was finally completed she knew that she could have expressed it much more elegantly, but papa was inexorable.



HALLADAY.

He'd tell the story in America, by jimsiny, and he wanted to read his own despatch in the *London Thunderer*. So she copied it in a bold, round hand, signed Vincent's cipher, gave it to Vincent's commissionaire, who

columns which were held to be as infallible as the multiplication table itself. This was the despatch:—

ITALY.

[From our own Correspondent.]

I saw Signor Crespo this evening, and learned from him that the new and important item in the Budget, the new source of revenue which has been promised and upon which great hopes have been based, will take the form of a national tax upon moustaches. In his Bill, which he will introduce in the Chamber to-morrow, it will be provided that every citizen of Italy wearing a moustache shall pay a sumptuary tax thereupon of one lira yearly.

In the ordinary course this tax will yield the twenty million lire per annum which are so greatly needed and whose source up to now it has been impossible to discover. Of course a certain amount of opposition from the Left is confidently to be expected. The tax on moustaches will undoubtedly afford an opportunity to the Socialists to champion individual rights and protest against interference therewith; but on the other hand, the Clerical wing are certain to view the innovation with favour. The popular acceptance of the measure is, however, difficult to forecast.

This was probably the most nonsensical despatch that has ever appeared in any newspaper, great or small. The editor had looked at it, incredulous. The

leader writer said, "H'm, it's neck or nothing with Crespo." Only Vincent's cipher and the condition of Italy made belief possible; but it was believed. This was the leader:—

The extraordinary course which has been adopted by the Prime Minister of Italy in order to replenish the national treasury is so radical an extension of the general principle of taxation that neither its wisdom nor its result can yet be declared with any degree of certainty. Statistics do not, unfortunately, furnish us with the number of Italian citizens who at the period of the last census were wearing moustaches. It is a well-known fact, however, that the custom of cultivating hair in an ornamental form upon the upper lip is, perhaps, more firmly established as a national habit in Italy than in any other country of the world at the present time. The first lesson of this proposed legislation is its certain indication of the extreme, if not hopeless, financial straits into which the monarchy has fallen. The second is the very doubtful character of the tax itself as a reliable source of revenue, when viewed from the standpoints of expediency and of successful enforcement. It will be necessary for legislation to establish with perfect clearness not only what a moustache legally is, but



"PAPA EXPANDED LIKE A BALLOON."

called at eleven, and both she and papa went to bed feeling very well indeed.

At ten o'clock the next morning—Roman time—the face of Europe wore a fearful geographical frown. Consternation, perplexity, and uncertainty ruled in five empires. From Downing Street the news went under the Channel to the Paris Elysée and overland to the winter palaces of Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg. In her honest attempt to sway nations, the dear girl had succeeded. The Thrones sent messengers to the Foreign Offices; the Foreign Offices wired the Ambassadors, and neither wire nor cable could work half fast enough to please the respective senders. When the Stock Exchanges opened, Italian Rentes fell six points, and their allies weakened in proportion. The smash had come. Italy was bankrupt and the Triple Alliance would fall to pieces. It all arose from a despatch and a leading article in the columns of the *London Thunderer*, those

also at what age, both of the wearer and of the moustache itself, it becomes taxable; and in these two directions, to say nothing of the popular acceptance or rejection of the measure, the visible difficulties are both many and great, etc., etc.

On that very afternoon a man in a yachting suit went over the side of a yacht at Naples and was rowed to the pier. He was happy and buoyant with the buoyant happiness of the man who loves and is loved. Upon reaching the pier he bought the second edition of the *Corriere di Napoli*, and glanced at the telegraph columns. The *Thunderer* despatch had been cabled back to Naples, and under sensational headlines was the first to meet his eye.

His first thought was that he was losing his mind and inventing the telegram. Then something flashed upon him, and his heart seemed to stop beating. He staggered to the curb of the pier, sat down, and shut his eyes. He was never sure afterwards whether he fainted or not. For five minutes he knew only the silent whirl of agonized thoughts. He grasped at once what had happened. It was Halladay's work, and Halladay had ruined him. The *Thunderer* was the laughing-stock of Europe, and he, as the responsible sender of that despatch, was journalistically done for. Ambition spoke first, and the pain was of the bitterest.

Love spoke next, but with all his rage and despair he could not find the power to be harsh to Miss Belmayne. "The dear girl!" he said. "She did her best, and that scoundrel fooled her completely. Oh, oh, oh!" And he squeezed his head with his hands as if to shut out the thought of his position and the inevitable consequences that he must face.

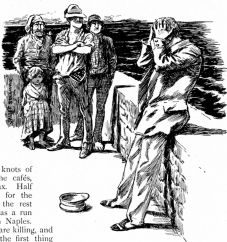
A little knot of loungers had gathered, his evident pain exciting their sympathy. This recalled him to himself, and he took a cab and drove away. Little knots of men stood in front of all the cafés, excitedly discussing the new tax. Half of them were clean-shaven for the first time in their lives, and the rest were about to be. There was a run on every hairdresser's shop in Naples. The Italian is poor, the taxes are killing, and the art of dodging them is the first thing taught to children. Vincent still held the

paper, and now read its comments on the tax. They combined a scream of sarcastic laughter with a howl of furious rage. Italy had been touched on the spot that was tenderest. But—and here was a gleam of hope—the reputation of the *Thunderer* was so high that the despatch had been taken seriously. The "sell" had not yet been exposed. If only Crespo would save him—but, no! Crespo's position, already imperilled by a crisis, was worse than his own. Crespo would want to shoot him on the spot.

He caught the 2.40 train and rode to Rome in a state of numbness. What he would do to Halladay he did not dare to think. He was a man in a rage, a hungry, thirsty rage, that threatened to overpower him. Nor did he dare to go to his apartment. There lay the telegram dismissing him in derision and contempt. In his sorrow his heart turned to love for consolation. Arrived at Rome he drove to the hotel, entered Miss Belmayne's drawing-room with a white, sad face, and sat in the shadow.

The Acting Correspondent came in radiant, beaming with pride and pleasure over her shrewdness and success.

"Have you seen it? It's in the Roman papers. You didn't get beaten. Oh, I was



"A LITTLE KNOT OF LOUNGERS HAD GATHERED."

so worried, and so happy when I knew you were safe!"

She stopped, mystified at his silence. Then she saw his pallor and his expression.

"Are you ill? What is it? What's the matter?"

He tried to spare her; tried to pass the matter over lightly. But the moment she knew that the despatch had caused his trouble all subterfuges were useless. Her face, too, grew white, and she kept on asking him question after question, till she fully understood the effect of what she had done. His ruin was certain, but his replies were gentle, quiet, and full of sympathy. Then the society girl known as Miss Belmayne disappeared, and the woman in her came out. His career was ended, and through his love for her. The big, beautiful girl stood up, tried to say she was sorry, but couldn't. Her lips only quivered and wouldn't work. Then she sat down, bolt upright on the sofa, and the tears came first creeping and then tumbling down from her eye-lashes as she cried, broken-hearted, without a word or a handkerchief. He tried to soothe her, to say it was nothing. "Oh, Edward!" was all she said.

In spite of his grief he observed the word "Edward."

Upon this interesting and unconventional social tableau bustled in Papa Belmayne, of Chicago, millionaire and newspaper correspondent. He saw a white young man and a young person bathed in tears.

"Wha—what's the matter?" said he, starting and peering over his eye-glasses.

"I'm done for, but it's all my own fault," said the young man.

Papa inquired and was told. He sat down suddenly in a state of collapse.

"If that sneak comes here again, I'll cowhide him," he said, exploding. "I'll thrash him anyhow. Anyhow!" he roared, with the rage of an honest man who has been beaten at his own game.

Then several minutes of sad, solemn silence ensued, each trying to find a ray of light in the gloom.

"Why don't you see Crespo? He's a friend of yours, isn't he?" said Belmayne.

"He has been."

"Then come on. Laura, you come with

us. We did it. We're responsible, and we'll take the blame. Crespo is the only man that can save you. Here! Order me a carriage!" he shouted to the maid.

The combative financier, who had faced and won a hundred battles that were real battles, was not to be daunted by a Prime Minister and a newspaper and a little thing like this. His courage, of course, infected his daughter. With father at the helm everything would, of course, be all right. It must be all right. So she hoped once more, and darted away for hat-pins. While waiting for her and the hat-pins at the elevator another thing occurred. Belmayne put his hand in a friendly way on Vincent's shoulder and said: "Young man, don't you worry. If you have to give up journalism, you may possibly do much better than that. I know you, and I like you." Vincent nodded quietly. The implied promise was well meant, but it did not appeal to him just then. They drove to the Quirinal Hill in silence. The Acting Correspondent merely asked her father if her hat was on straight. She secretly proposed to take the Prime Minister by storm.



"OH, EDWARD!" WAS ALL SHE SAID.

Now, during all these woful occurrences Chance, which, as everybody knows, is the prime minister of Providence, was playing tricks upon another Prime Minister, the temporary ruler of Italy. Signor Crespo was at his wits' end over the new tax measures. In order to pass them he had to yield to the demands of the Socialist-Anarchist wing of his party, and if he failed

to pass them he fell from power. One alternative was as distasteful as the other, and he was rapidly growing grey in his efforts to find a way out of the dilemma. When the *Thunderer* despatch was brought him he jumped to his feet in amazement. Then he scratched his head and said, "Ah!" Then he smiled a smile of joy. He foresaw something.

Two minutes afterwards the double doors of his private room were burst open and a portly marquis, one of his enemies in the Cabinet, rushed in and said: "Crespo—for Heaven's sake——"

The Prime Minister said nothing.

Other high politicians of his party, rivals and enemies, rushed in and cried: "Crespo—for Heaven's sake——"

Signor Crespo said nothing.

The King sent a noble duke hot-footed to say: "Crespo—for Heaven's sake——"

The Prime Minister still said nothing, but in different words.

In half an hour they were all on their knees, all the opposing elements he had spent months in trying to combine. They accepted the tax on moustaches as a fact, and saw that, in revenge on them, he was going to ruin the party. They begged him not to propose it. He consented—on conditions. They agreed abjectly to his terms, told him to count on their votes, and, when the Chamber met, passed his Budget, which they had previously agreed to defeat, by a huge majority.

This is why the Prime Minister, who had made inquiries, was also eager to see the Acting Correspondent who had sent that despatch. Being a devout man, however, he looked upon the real sender as Providence.

The carriage party entered the Ministry. To Vincent it seemed to be wrapped in accusing gloom. It was his farewell to the Prime Minister, both as friend and correspondent. Nevertheless, he wrote on his card: "With Mr. and Miss Belmayne to explain that despatch."

They were silently ushered in and stood in the great man's presence, three drooping figures, guilty and downcast. Belmayne was not happy. He was not used to cringing

before anybody. Laura's eyes were full of new tears. She would sway no more nations, whatever the temptation. Vincent was pale and grave.

For some reason the Prime Minister began to laugh. He had not felt like laughing for three months, and he enjoyed the feeling. He laughed till the tears came into his eyes.

Vincent was angry.

"Does it strike you as comical?" said he.

"Comical? It's providential. See here," said Signor Crespo, pointing to a pile of at least a hundred telegrams. "All Europe wants information about your despatch. I mean Miss Belmayne's despatch," he said, bowing gracefully.

"Then you—you understand how it happened?"

"Yes."

"And, of course, you—you've exposed it?"

"Oh, no. They thought I meant it. It has saved the situation."

"What?" said Vincent, thunderstruck.

"And in return, my friend, I have saved you. The *Thunderer*, unable to get an answer from you, telegraphed me for indorsement. I sent this:—

"The *Thunderer*, London.

"In consequence of concessions from opposing elements I shall not present my proposed tax on moustaches."

"CRESPO."

"BY JOVE!" said Vincent.

"EDWARD!" screamed somebody.

"Hurrah!" said Belmayne.

And Edward's arms were filled with sudden millinery, and two hearts were filled with deepest joy.

Two events of different kinds succeeded.

Halladay was abused by the *National* for missing the most important news of the year. When he gave a true explanation of the matter he was scoffed at. It was visibly false. He then proceeded to turn to a pale but not unbecoming green colour. The doctors said liver; the cause was unrequited love.

The other event was a social function of a happy, even hilarious, character, at the Grand Hotel. This is not of importance, however, in a country where orange-blossoms are indigenous.

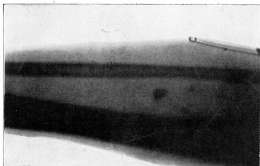
The Röntgen Rays in Warfare.

By HERBERT C. FYFE.



Of all the gallant soldiers who took part in the recent campaign against the Afridis on the north-west frontier of India probably none displayed more personal bravery than General Wodehouse. He is described as walking about in an almost solid stream of lead, and the extraordinary part about it is that he only received one wound, and that was in the leg. The surgeon took him into a tent in order that the missile might be extracted; and while this was being done

portion of the shot might have been left behind, he went to the base hospital at Rawul Pindi, and there Major Beevor, R.A.M.C., took a radiograph here reproduced, which showed that his surmise was correct. This picture is very interesting, showing as it does that not only bones but fibrous tissue (commonly called gristle) will sometimes split a bullet, or chip pieces from its surface. The bullet entered the General's leg in the upper part, passed obliquely downwards, and was cut out on the opposite side of the leg. In its course it passed through



6.—BULLET WOUND IN THE LEG OF GENERAL WODEHOUSE.
Taken on the battlefield by Major Beevor.

the Afridis crawled up and suddenly blazed into the operating tent, putting thirteen shots through the canvas. Instead of showing any alarm the General, according to the testimony of eye-witnesses, was as calm as if he were in a London hospital, and the operation proceeded, in spite of the rain of bullets, just as if there were not an Afridi within 100 miles. Contrary to advice, General Wodehouse, although his wound was of an unpleasant jagged character, would not be laid up for long, and shortly after the injury he rode into Peshawar at the head of his brigade with the wound still unhealed. However, thinking that some

the space which (as the photograph shows) exists between the two bones; this space is filled in by a tough fibrous membrane, and as the bullet pierced it the membrane cut four pieces off its surface, as can be plainly seen.

In the upper part of the picture is a safety-pin, and this is visible because in taking pictures with the X-rays, which pierce all such material, it is not necessary to remove dressings or splints.

The case of General Wodehouse is only one of a very great number in which those marvellous rays known by the name of their

illustrious demonstrator, Professor Röntgen, have done so much to aid the surgeon in his work and to alleviate human suffering. They enable him to determine the position, size, and nature of foreign bodies in his patients, and to observe the condition of injured bones, joints, and internal organs.

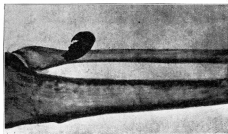
In the present article attention will be drawn to the manner in which this most valuable addition to surgical science has been applied in military warfare. It is satisfactory to know that the War Office has at length realized the importance of equipping our large military hospitals at home and abroad with an efficient X-ray outfit, and of encouraging officers of the Army Medical Service to acquire a thorough practical knowledge of radiography.

Turning now to the actual working of the Röntgen ray in warfare, some account must be given of Surgeon-Major W. C. Beevor's experiences during the recent frontier expedition to India. This was the first time that the X-rays were employed in a campaign.

"The Afridi," remarks Major Beevor, "uses bullets of almost every description, and not only bullets, but missiles of various kinds. So long as he can have a go at his enemy with something hard, he does not care a rap what that hard thing is—a stone, a piece of lead of any sort, or a piece of telegraph wire. He relies upon the telegraph wire for one of his chief amusements, because

dispensation the beneficent rays have prevented much suffering to the patient which would have occurred had probing been resorted to, and the operator may now dispense with the unsatisfactory and frequently not-too-well sterilized probe. "As a death-dealing instrument, a dirty and unskilfully used probe," said a doctor recently, "has few equals, and many lives will be saved by rendering its use unnecessary." Modern science has provided the surgeons with a probe which is painless, which is exact, and, most important of all, which is aseptic—qualities not possessed by the older, though ingenious, instrument bearing Delaton's name.

It is not possible here to enter into any detailed discussion of the various interesting cases in which Major Beevor applied the Röntgen rays in the Tirah Campaign. In very many instances he was able to find bullets by their means where ordinary methods were unavailing in disclosing their position. In the case of a Ghoorka who was shot in the back of his thigh in the first fight of Dargai, every means of probing was tried, but no bullet could be found, yet as there was no aperture of exit the surgeons knew there must be a foreign body irritating the man's leg. It would have been impossible to have found the bullet until the swelling and the irritation of the wound had subsided; in fact, it might never have subsided, and it was in contemplation to amputate the man's leg. By means



2.—BULLET WOUND IN THE LEG OF A GHOORKA.
Taken at Dargai by Major Beevor.

he likes to chop it into little bits and have a 'snapshot' at his enemy, whether one of his own people or a heathen—*i.e.*, 'a white man.' Before the advent of the X-rays, the surgeon had to probe about in order to try and locate a bullet or other substance. In the new

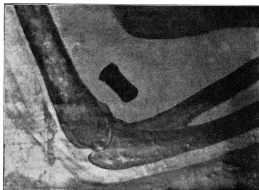
of the X-rays, however, Major Beevor localized the bullet exactly, which was found to have traversed diagonally from above downwards and inwards, to have struck the bone, and rebounded in a channel of its own (No. 2).

The wounded native soldiers who were

examined by the rays took much interest in the process. One was heard to say afterwards that a "sahib with a peculiar light" had examined his leg.

Another case which deserves mention was that of a man who was shot on the inner side of the biceps muscle (No. 3). He was attended by a very intelligent and scientific surgeon of the Indian army, who probed and searched in every direction without success, and then sent the patient away on a furlough

incrusted or surrounded by adventitious fibrous material. The surgeon cut down upon it, and it took him about an hour and a half to dissect the bullet from the tendinous material with which it was surrounded, and when the tendon had been massaged and stretched the man returned to duty. I suppose he got his wife, but he was an excellent fellow, and probably more pleased at being cured than he would have been at getting his pension."



3—BULLET IN ELBOW OF NATIVE SOLDIER.

Taken by Major Battersby.

for six weeks. The rest of the story may be told in Major Beevor's own words: "He returned saying that he could not use his elbow: he got it at a certain angle, and then it locked suddenly; he could throw a stone, and even use a lance, but he was a cavalryman, and all his actions were awkward because he could not get his arm extended. They thought he was humbugging. The Indian soldier, no matter who he is, is a champion at humbug when it pleases him; he is a charming fellow in every way, but if he likes to 'put on the agony,' he can do it very successfully. Well, the surgeon said to me, 'Will you have a look at this man, because he is such a good chap, and I don't think he is humbugging, but he wants to get married and go away on a pension?' We examined him with a fluorescent screen, and instantly detected the cause of his disability; the bullet had slipped down through the muscular fibres of the biceps muscle into the sheath of a tendon, and had become

By the courtesy of Major J. C. Battersby, Royal Army Medical Corps, who was in charge of the Röntgen apparatus with the Nile expeditionary force in the last Soudan Campaign, there are here reproduced for the first time in a popular magazine some photographs of great interest taken in Egypt, showing how the Röntgen rays were used for the benefit of our wounded soldiers in the recent Soudan Campaign.

The first (No. 4) shows the roin. induction coil at work. Major Battersby is here counting the seconds while a skiagraph of the shoulder is being taken. The photographic plate can be seen in a specially devised wooden plate-holder under the shoulder-joint. Those who are used to experimenting with the X-rays will notice a very ingenious tube-holder.

No. 5 is a photograph of a "localizing apparatus," specially made for Major Battersby and used for the first time on active service by him during the recent Nile Expedition to Khartoum. By means of this



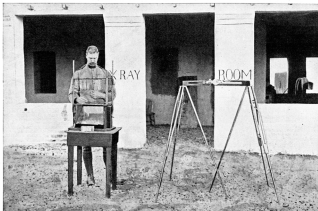
4.—MAJOR BATTERSBY AND HIS ORDERLY TAKING A RADIOPHOTOGRAPH IN THE SUDAN. (Photo. By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Belligerent Regs.")

instrument the Major could accurately determine the depth and exact position of bullets in the flesh, and then could operate with certainty.

The next picture (No. 6) is of a very novel character. Major Battersby used a tandem

bicycle to generate the electricity necessary for his work, and in the photograph the arrangements by which the lonely desert was illuminated for the first time with electric light by this novel method can be clearly seen.

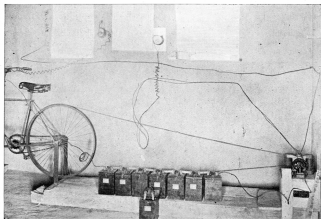
"The pulley of a small dynamo," writes



From 6

5.—MAJOR BATTERSBY USING THE LOCALIZING APPARATUS. (By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Belligerent Regs.")

(Photo.



From 6) 6.—TANDEM BICYCLE USED TO GENERATE ELECTRICITY FOR THE X-RAYS.
(By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Röntgen Rays.")

(Photo.)

Major Battersby, "was connected by means of a leather strap with the back wheel of a specially-constructed tandem bicycle. The required velocity for the dynamo was then obtained. Having carefully adjusted the circuit with the storage battery, and also with the voltmeter and ammeter, the warrant officer took his position on the seat of the bicycle and commenced pedalling. When 15 volts and 4 amperes were registered, the switch close to the handle of the bicycle was opened and the charging of the battery commenced; as the resistance became greater, a sensation of riding up hill was experienced, and the ser-

vices of an additional orderly requisitioned for the front seat. This bicycle practice was generally carried out in a shade temperature of 110 deg. F., so that everyone was glad when (the switch having been turned off before pedalling ceased, in order to avoid any discharge from the battery) the machine was brought to a standstill."

No. 7 is the Nile at Abadieh (eight miles north of Berber), where the advanced base surgical hospital was situated and the headquarters of the Röntgen-ray work.

In No. 8 some fragments of a bullet are lodged in the left arm of a soldier.



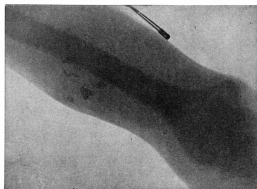
From 7) 7.—THE NILE AT ABADIEH—THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE RÖNTGEN-RAY WORK IN THE SUDAN.
(By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Röntgen Rays.")

(Photo.)

No. 9 is a very interesting photograph. It shows a bullet in the thigh. This was taken with a small 6in. coil at Omdurman, while the engagement was actually going on. The bullet is flattened out like a shilling at the lower end of the right thigh. The plate was

his instruments from the excessive climatic conditions he would necessarily encounter. He surrounded his boxes with very thick felt covers, and by keeping these constantly wet the internal temperature was considerably reduced. Between Wadi Halfa and Abadieli all the

apparatus had to travel for two days and a night in an open truck, exposed during the daytime to the fierce heat of a blazing sun. By soaking the felt every two hours the journey's end was reached without mishap. Photographers will sympathize with Major Battersby in the difficulties which beset him while working in the desert. He found that plates with the thinnest film appeared most suitable for the intense heat, but thick or thin plates could



8.—FRAGMENTS OF BULLET IN LEFT ARM OF SOLDIER.
Taken at Omdurman by Major Battersby.
(By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Roentgen Rays.")

much injured by heat and sand during the process of development, and a splotch in the left-hand top corner represented some Soudan dust which, in spite of Major Battersby's precautions, succeeded in getting on to the plate.

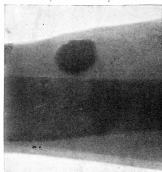
No. 10 shows the result of a bullet wound in the left leg of a private of the Cameron Highlanders. The skiagram shows clearly the fracture of both bones, the tibia especially being very severely damaged and suffering from hiorosis. Several splashes of lead can be seen in the wound.

No. 11 is a bullet wound in the left ankle of a private. In the side view the bullet is seen in the joint between the astragalus and scaphoid. The band round the ankle is a strap of lead plaster.

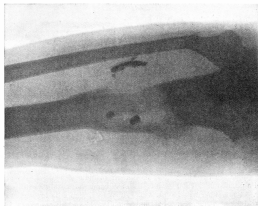
When Major Battersby decided to take an X-ray outfit to the Soudan he wrote to the Principal Medical Officer of the Egyptian Army for advice on one or two points. The latter wrote: "Beavor worked chiefly in cold regions; your efforts will be carried out in intense heat, where the temperature in tents is frequently over 120deg. F."

Before leaving Cairo for the front Major Battersby took special precautions to protect

not have been saved without the aid of an alum bath, as the water for developing was comparatively hot, and no ice was procurable; as a consequence, the more delicate shades of development had to be sacrificed. He noticed



9.—BULLET FLATTENED AGAINST THIGH-BONE.
Taken at Omdurman by Major Battersby.
(By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Roentgen Rays.")



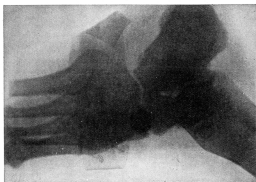
10.—FRACTURE OF BOTH BONES OF LEG, SHOWING SPLASHES OF LEAD.
Taken at Omdurman by [Major Battersby.
 (By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Röntgen Rays.")

a marked tendency for development to proceed at a very rapid pace, making the picture flash up at once, when the greatest precautions were necessary to preserve the result. As a rule, developing work was performed at 3 a.m., and even then (the coolest time) the temperature in the mud-brick dark room varied from over 90deg. F. to 100deg. F. "An atmosphere laden with dust and constant dust-storms is most trying," said Major Battersby. "Eleven plates were destroyed one night by a fierce storm, which blew off the improvised mud roof. The wooden plate-holders had a disagreeable habit of shrinking, and thus allowing light to gain admission."

Major Battersby's head-quarters were at Abadieh, a small village on the Nile, about 1,250 miles from Cairo, and nine miles north of

Berber. Here the Egyptian troops had constructed a number of large, well-ventilated mud-bricked dwellings, which admirably suited the requirements of a large surgical hospital in the field. After the Battle of Omdurman one hundred and twenty-one British officers, non-commissioned officers, and men were brought back wounded to the surgical hospital at Abadieh. Of this number there were twenty-one cases in which the bullet could not be found, nor its ab-

sence proved by ordinary methods. By the help of the Röntgen rays, which were used about sixty times, the bullet was either found or its absence proved in twenty out of these twenty-one cases. In the odd case the patient was so ill with a severe bullet wound in the lung that it was not considered justifiable to examine him at the time.



11.—BULLET IN LEFT ANKLE.
Taken at Omdurman by [Major Battersby.
 (By permission of the Publishers of "Archives of the Röntgen Rays.")

A UNIQUE MINING CONTEST



By A. M. DONALDSON.

Author of "The Greatest Athletic Feat of Modern Times."

I EATS of endurance have ever exercised a peculiar fascination over me. Some time ago I described to the readers of *THE STRAND* the manner in which a man won a million sovereigns by accomplishing a feat absolutely unique in the history of athletics. Since then I have been fortunate enough to witness a trial of strength and endurance altogether weird and astounding—a coal-hewing competition right down in the bowels of the earth.

The competitors were John Thomson, the powerful oversman of a Lanarkshire coal mine, and Colin Hay, a young doctor of medicine. This was how the strange contest was brought about:—

Henry Wood, after working in the pit as boy, man, and oversman, became in the early eighties proprietor of Broomcross Colliery. The colliery takes its name from Broomcross village, which is situated about six miles to the east of Glasgow. Ten years later Mr. Wood purchased two neighbouring collieries, and in time became one of the wealthiest mine-owners in the kingdom. A widower, his daughter Mary presided over the household arrangements of his expansive villa at the west-end of Broomcross. A tall, graceful damsel of nineteen, in the summer of 1898 she met Colin Hay. He was on a visit to his old college chum, Arthur McKinley, whose father was the principal practitioner at Broomcross. The two young fellows had some time previously simultaneously taken their M.B.Ch.B. degrees at Edinburgh University.

I also made the acquaintance of Dr. Hay while he was there. From the first I liked

his face: his good looks were undeniable. Of more than medium height, with very white teeth and hands, he was always smartly dressed. At a casual glance he appeared to be slimly built; a more critical inspection showed that that was owing to the tailor's art—that his frame was that of a natural athlete. He certainly had not gained a triple Blue at the University, or even captained a cricket or football team, yet on occasion he had proved a more than useful athlete. But his career in the athletic arena had early been ended. In some unaccountable manner he acquired the reputation of being the laziest student of his years, and he made it his conscientious endeavour to live up to his reputation.

Broomcross society is limited; its amusements are few. Dr. Hay and Miss Wood met frequently. They played golf; they cycled together. They soon found how well they were matched to go tandem through the long journey of life. But when Colin Hay asked the wealthy coal proprietor for his consent to the engagement, he laughed long and boisterously.

"Ha! ha!" he laughed. His English was wont to be a little irregular in moments of excitement. "It's as fine a thing as I've heard on for many a day. She is only a girl, but I have other views for her when the proper time comes. I'm getting up in years; I've three collieries going, and I mean my girl to marry a practical man, who will keep the collieries in the family when I'm done with. You are not my sort at all. I've no fancy for city mashers with their fancy jackets and swagger shirts, and twopence halfpenny in their pockets. Tell me, young feller, what you've got to marry on."

"Four hundred pounds and my profession," the doctor replied. "I've had a junior partnership offered to me which in time should be worth at least three hundred a year. Mary and I consider that my prospects justify me in asking for your consent."

"No, no," said the coal king. "The man for my girl is a man to look after the pits when my day is done. Aye, my lad, I'd lief enough give her to you if you could go down the pit and do a week's work with the best of my men. Why, man, I'd throw in a partnership worth a bit more than three hundred a year for a dowry. But I've no use for men of your stamp who never did a hard day's work in their life for fear of soiling their pretty hands."

The young lover protested, the old father was obdurate, and on the day following Colin Hay bade Broomcross adieu for a time.

"So," said Mr. Wood, on his daughter's return from seeing Hay off, "you've been seeing young collar and cuffs again. You must stop this nonsense, my dear, and marry a man—not a popinjay."

"He has left Broomcross," she answered, "and will not be back before November. He told me you promised him your consent to our engagement and a partnership when he is able to do a week's work with the best of your men. Now, dad, I'll hold you to that."

"I believe I did say something of the kind," Mr. Wood said, "and I'm not the man to go back on my word. It was a safe promise. It would kill the poor thing to send him down in the cage. Seeing you've lost your doll, Mary, I'll take you into Glasgow to-morrow and buy you a new toy."

Vermyle is a village four miles from Broomcross. It is scarcely possible to conceive any less inviting spot in which to reside. The village has been built directly over an old coal-field. For miles around the country is honeycombed with mines. From time to time subsidences occur. The walls of the houses gape with huge cracks, and the buildings with twisted gables and roofs askew bear a most dissipated look.

Outside this village one afternoon in October last, three months after Dr. Hay's visit to Broomcross, I met some pitmen

garbed in their dirty moleskins. In one of them, despite his grimy clothes and face, I thought I recognised the young doctor. I spoke to him.

"Halloa, Hay," I said. "When did you change your profession?"

The miner walked past without taking any notice. This wasn't good enough for me. I knew something of his love affair. I turned back and spoke to him again.

"You are the counterpart," I said, "of a gentleman whose name is Hay. Will you oblige me with your name?"

"It's all right, Parker," he said now. "I see you can't be bluffed. I'm in training, you know, to take on the best of old Wood's men at a game of coal-hewing—'howking' they call it here. Come along with me until I wash off some of this filth, and I'll let you know about it."

As he spoke we stopped in front of a small, whitewashed, red-tiled cottage, standing in a small garden a little back from the road. "I have a contract," he continued, "with the tenant of this broken-down shanty. I pay her half a crown a week for the use, night and morning, of her room to change in. It's part of the contract that when I knock off work she supplies a tub of hot water and unlimited soap. Will you come in or wait outside while I change?"

I preferred to wait outside. In twenty minutes Colin Hay, spick and span as I had known him at Broomcross, sauntered out of the doorway. He had a cigar between his lips. He held a case in his gloved right hand which he offered to me, saying, with all his old drawl and affectation of weariness:—

"Have a cigar? Not village brewed, I assure you. Bocks, they are. I have nice rooms in a small villa less than a quarter of a mile away. Tea is waiting now. Come and join me in a cup. Seeing you have caught me in the act, I may as well explain my masquerading. But you must excuse me talking until we have some tea. It is an excellent pick-me-up, and I've had a hard day's work."

We had tea in a well-furnished dining-room. A cheerful fire blazed in the hearth. We wheeled a pair of easy chairs forward and smoked in silence, while the landlady lit the gas and removed the cups. The cigars were excellent.



44
"YOU MUST STOP THIS NONSENSE,
MY DEAR."

"Are you in a hurry?" Hay interrogated, when the table was cleared: "and, by the way, what are you doing here?"

"Doctor," I replied, "I refuse to leave this house until you have confided in me the meaning of this strange freak. If I can assist you in any way, I am at your service. Unfortunately, I reside here. In a fit of temporary insanity, induced by the proximity of the place to town, I leased a house."

As we sat and smoked, Colin Hay told me of his reception by Mr. Wood when he asked his consent to an alliance with his daughter. He intended to accept the coal-owner's offer, he said, and do a week's coal-bewing against the best man in the Broomcross Collieries. The prize, Mr. Wood's consent to the marriage and a partnership in the collieries.

The young doctor had been in training for three months, and hoped to be thoroughly fit in another month. Coal-mining had been most uncongenial labour at first. I smiled as he described his early experiences.

"The first day I was down the 'Brandy' pit—local term, I suppose; but if it has another name I don't know it," he said, "my working ground was a 4ft. seam, half a mile from the pit mouth. Short though the distance was, I was tired with the stooping before I commenced to hew. Crouched up, sitting on my haunches, aching in every limb, the blisters rising on my soft hands, I pecked away at the coal. The man I was with was a good workman, and, thanks to him, I was saved from disgracing myself altogether."

"I crawled home in the evening. When I woke next morning the flesh of my hands was raw, the fingers bent and fixed, and a separate pain shouted out from each of the two hundred and forty odd bones of my body. I attempted to rise, but the agony was excruciating. In four days I was down the mine again."

"Will you pull it off, do you think?" I asked.

"I have one or two points in my favour," he answered. "At a day an expert miner might beat me easily. At a week it is not so certain. I have satisfied myself as to the most important point, and that is, for how many hours to work per day with best results."

It was late before I bade the young doctor good-night, so interesting was the subject and so excellent the cigars.

Mr. Wood was in his study examining some plans one evening about a month after this meeting, when Dr. Hay was ushered in—Colin Hay, the well-groomed, immaculate in his attire, more elegant than ever.

"Halloo, young collar and cuffs," was Mr. Wood's rude greeting. "You are the last man I expected, or wished, to see."

"How are you?" said Hay. "I certainly did not anticipate an enthusiastic welcome, but such impertinence is scarcely pardonable even from a prospective father-in-law. However, I shall let it pass. I have come for fifteen minutes' straight talk with you."

"Go on then. If you have anything to say, say it and cut; I'm busy."

"Exactly, Mr. Wood. The pleasure at the termination of the interview will be mutual. In July I, as a matter of courtesy, asked your consent to your daughter's marriage with me. You gave it and also, unasked, the offer of a partnership in your collieries—on certain conditions."

"Nothing of the sort, sir. With my consent my daughter shall never marry a tailor's advertising station."

"Your invective savours of the pitman," said Hay, with quiet scorn. "But it is not unexpected. It is your frequent boast that you are a man whose word is as good as his bond. I am going to put you to the test. When I spoke to you on that occasion, at first you refused to entertain my proposal. Subsequently at our interview, you stated quite explicitly that when I was fit to go down a mine and do a week's work with the best of your men, I should have your consent to the marriage and a partnership for dowry."

"Ha, ha! So I did." Mr. Wood leant back in his chair and laughed loudly. "It would be as good as a play to see you with a pick in a 3ft. seam. You couldn't earn enough in a month to pay your week's laundry bill."



"MR. WOOD LEANT BACK IN HIS CHAIR AND LAUGHED LOUDLY."

"As I was about to remark," Colin Hay resumed, "I have been considering your offer and have decided to accept it. I am ready at any time. My proposal is that your nominee and I commence work say at Sunday midnight, and continue till Saturday at midnight."

"Pooh!" said the mine-owner, contemptuously. "You would not stand up to it for an hour. I can't allow my daughter to be made a fool of."

"Of course," said Hay, "presumably because it suits you to do so, you choose to view this matter in the light of a joke. Seeing that with you the deliberate going back on your word is such a light thing, I shall now have no hesitation in marrying Mary whenever it is convenient, with or without your permission. The partnership would have been a good thing purely from a financial point of view. It is always well, moreover, to be on friendly terms with one's relatives. Before I go I will give you a word of advice. Never again boast that your word is as good as your bond. Remember also that the partnership proposal was yours, not mine."

He made to go.

"One moment," Wood called, before his visitor had reached the door. He was beginning to think that he was serious. "Do you really mean what you say?"

"Undoubtedly. If you had been prepared to hold to your own offer, I was also ready to give you something of a *quid pro quo*. In the event of my defeat I was prepared to hold our engagement in abeyance until your daughter's majority. In the event of my failure to make a creditable display I was prepared to break off the engagement altogether. And this with her acquiescence."

"That's a guarantee anyway, if Mary confirms what you say, that I won't be made a fool of in my own pit without getting some change back. Now, my lad, you will have your chance. If between Sunday and Saturday midnight you can hew as much coal as John Thomson, my working manager at Broomcross—howk, mind ye, no blasting—I'll take you into my business without a penny; and from the day you marry my girl you shall have a third of the properties and a third of the profits."

"That is what I expected from you," said Hay. "I think it would be better for us to meet at the colliery to-morrow and arrange at which seams the hewing has to be performed and any other details. Will three o'clock suit you?"

"I'll make it suit me," Mr. Wood answered.

"I may as well tell you that John Thomson has beaten every man in Lanarkshire at coal-howking, and," looking on Hay with undisguised contempt, "he'll make rings round a molly-coddle like you. Wouldn't you be as well now to go away home and to bed? You'll need a rest after this trying discussion."

"I am tired, certainly," Hay drawled in retort, "of your uncouth impertinences. But I hope, when you and I are partners, to knock some breeding into you."

Early next morning Mr. Wood sent for Thomson, his oversman or working manager. A working manager's duties are to take general supervision of the mine and miners, not to do manual labour except in exceptional circumstances. Thomson had been promoted from the ranks two months previously. A giant among his fellows, fully 6ft. in height, and of strength proportionate, he looked fit to fight for a kingdom. He touched his cap as he approached his master, who was waiting for him at the pit-head.

"Are you still able to use a pick?" Mr. Wood asked.

He smiled the smile of a man who has confidence in his powers, as he answered:—

"I daresay I might, although I am out of practice. Have you a job for me?"

"Aye, John. But he will be the softest mark you have ever had. You'll be ready to start at twelve on Sunday night, and go on till the end of the week unless he stops before that. I daresay any hutch-boy would beat him, but I'll run no risks."

"Who is he, sir?" Thomson asked.

"A friend of Dr. McKinley. He has been running after my daughter. To stop his nonsense I said he could have her if he could do a week's work against the best of my men. The young fop is willing to try. Say nothing of my daughter's connection with the affair to anyone."

"Is it that overdressed chap, with the light kid gloves?" the man asked, incredulously.

"That's he. He will be here at three o'clock. I want you to be here then to fix on your workings for next week."

"I'll be here then, sir," Thomson answered. "But either you are joking or the man is daft."

At three o'clock Mr. Wood introduced the opponents to each other. It was outside the cage. Hay at once offered his hand to Thomson, saying:—

"I am certain we shall have a pleasant contest, and may the best man win."



"MR. WOOD INTRODUCED THE OPPONENTS TO EACH OTHER."

The man touched his front lock.

They descended some seventy fathoms into the earth, and walked along the dark passages illumined only by the fitful gleam of their lamps. They wandered from working to working before deciding at which part of the mine to hold the contest. In close proximity were seams of varying thickness, one 6½ ft., one nearly 4 ft., and a third, nearly 3 ft. They arranged that each man should work at the 6 ft. seam until he had hewn three tons; next at the 4 ft. seam until he had produced three more tons; and then similarly at the 3 ft. seam. Thence back to the 6 ft. seam and round again. Not less than three tons was to be sent from any seam before the worker proceeded to that following. Any excess over three tons at any seam was to be credited to that particular seam in the round following.

The men were to pick the coal and that only. They were to be allowed as many assistants as necessary to draw the coal when picked from their workings, and hutch-boys whose duty it is to attend to the little waggons in which coal is conveyed to the shaft bottom, whence to the surface to be weighed.

"Beastly dirty job, isn't it?" Hay sighed, as he reached *terra firma*.

On Sunday afternoon, a few hours before the contest was timed to commence, Thomson and a miner employed in the pit wherein Hay had served his novitiate walked along Broomcross main street. Thomson was

narrating the conditions of the match, and describing how cleverly they had fixed it up as a trial of strength, wherein the other man's skill in blasting, if he had any, would be of no avail. They met Dr. Hay, who bowed to his opponent and passed on.

"D'ye ken that man?" asked Thomson's friend.

"Aye, that's him I was tellin' ye of," Thomson answered.

The first speaker stood still, caught his sides, and laughed immoderately. When his merriment had subsided, he said:—

"John Thomson, ye're a bigger fule than I took ye for. Bar yersel', there's no a better howker than him in the country. Aye, man, he's got ye on to a fower and a three fit seam. That's where he has the best o' a big, wechty man like yersel'. We could na' fathom what a man o' his stamp was daein' in the Brandy pit."

The oversman took his friend straightway to Mr. Wood's house, where he was subjected to a lengthy interrogation by the grim coal-master.

"Thomson," he said, before dismissing the men, "there's a fifty-pound note for you if you win. It will be the longest climb down of my life if you don't."

"And what about me?" said his man. "I'll never dare show face again if he beats me. I've had a heap o' chaff to stand ere noo o'er my match wi' the mannikin. Lor' kens what it will be if he licks me."

II.

In the depths of the earth at midnight I saw the competitors in that marvellous contest stripped for the fray. Never were two more splendid specimens of the Anglo-Saxon race, although of such widely different types, pitted against each other. The one meet model for a Hercules, the other for an Apollo.

Henry Wood's champion, John Thomson, was bared to the waist, revealing the massive chest, the powerful neck, and the great muscles of his arms. His nether limbs, like huge pillars, seemed ready to burst through the rough moleskins which garbed them. The square-jawed face with shaggy beard aptly completed the picture, the personification of brute strength. I gazed with admiration on the man as he twirled his heavy pick between the fingers of his right hand, thirty-five years old mayhap, still in his prime, strong and lusty.

Beside him Hay was completely dwarfed. He was dressed in grey moleskin trousers, spotlessly clean, and a thin flannel sweater.

Even here he was neat and trim. It was a night for light clothing. In the open the atmosphere was close and murky; in the mine the temperature was high. The change of clothing seemed to have changed the man. Along with his fashionable attire he had cast off that air of concentrated weariness, boredom, and listlessness which he habitually affected. His dress did not conceal the beauty of his figure. His wrist narrow, but strong as steel, swelled into a shapely forearm; his well-developed chest, without an ounce of superfluous flesh, tapered gracefully to his waist. A picture of unconscious grace, he stood in easy pose leaning on his pick.

In the dimly-lighted arch of coal other figures were grouped around the principals. Mr. Wood, Dr. Arthur McKinley, George Moore, the proprietor of a neighbouring mine, myself, and about half a score of miners who had descended to see the start and pass a parting jest with Thomson before his work of annihilation commenced.

At one minute past twelve the men walked to their posts and stood ready to strike; one minute later Mr. Wood shouted "Time!" and the picks were driven into the wall of coal.

The contestants were out of sight of each other, working at different parts of the same seam of coal which, ten yards or so to the right of the main roadway, ran parallel with it. This was the 6ft. seam already referred to in the conditions of the contest. Mr. Wood did not wait. Before leaving he asked Mr. Moore to act as his representative and see fair play. He, Dr. McKinley, and I, for a time, watched the men at work. Thomson, with a heavy pick of over three pounds weight, did noble work. He had full scope in the deep seam for his great strength. Like a fury he worked, the splinters flying in all directions.

"What a devil to work he is," said Moore. "No man in the county can come near him. For fifteen years at least he has met and routed the picked men of all the collieries in the district."

Hay was not making such rapid progress

as his doughty opponent. He used a pick of medium weight, fully half a pound lighter than Thomson's. Working with steady swing, he was taking things more easily.

Dr. McKinley said: "I only knew yesterday that Hay had been working for four months preparing for this. In a short contest it would be all Lombard Street to a china orange on Thomson; but at a week—we shall see. By Jove! He is a picture. Thomson resembles him as a dray horse a racehorse. Compare the symmetry of Hay's form with Thomson's ungainly structure, his narrow pelvis with Thomson's unshapely haunches. Nor is Thomson the man he was two months ago. He is gross and fleshy; he will tire; he won't stay the distance. Hay will. I have rarely seen any man, even among professional strong men, equal to Thomson in muscular development; yet, weight for weight, Hay has pounds more of muscular energy at his command. Nothing is wasted in the economy of his frame."

"I agree with you, doctor," I said. "I know nothing of coal-picking, but to my unpractised eye it is evident that Hay is using his weight in such a scientific manner that his muscles operate in beautiful harmony, while Thomson's muscles do not work in the same unison—with him energy is wasted in overcoming opposing groups of muscles. He cannot continue at the pace for a week; he may for a few hours—for a day, perhaps."

Moore did not appreciate our fine distinctions, and incredulously shook his head as he said: "Your man is plucky, but there is only one man in it."

We discussed the probabilities of the day's output of each man. It was Mr. Moore's opinion that, without blasting, an ordinary day's hewing of one man in such seams might be computed at about three and a half tons—say, half a ton per hour. Anything in excess of seven or eight tons for the day would be phenomenal.

At intervals we saw the hutchies or trolleys containing the product of the contestants as they whirled along the narrow rails to the shaft bottom, whence they were taken to the top and there weighed by a checker specially put on for the match.



EN

"AT INTERVALS WE SAW THE BUTCHER."

At ten minutes to three, Thomson emerged from his working. Such a man was he that, in that brief space of time, he had performed nearly an average day's work. Exulting in his strength, he squared his broad shoulders, and inflated his great chest as, black and perspiring, but unwearied, he passed us on his way to the smaller stratum of coal.

Meantime Dr. Hay was sitting on a flat piece of coal sipping home-made beef-tea from a common tin flask.

"Well, how goes it, doctor?" I asked.

"All right. I've done two tons."

"Thomson has already finished his first spell," said Moore.

"That I quite anticipated," said Hay. "When I think of the years he has spent underground I am lost in admiration of the man. I shall never, while I live, forget that picture at midnight, with him the centre-piece."

"Do you think you have any chance against him?" Moore inquired.

"Not if he uses his strength intelligently," Hay answered. "If he conserves it and is not unduly hampered in the narrow seams, my prospect of success is very remote. By the way, McKinley, I am having a chop sent down at six o'clock. Would you mind calling at the cottage, and asking the woman to send a pail of hot water, soap, and a clean towel along with it, and with all my meals?"

"Certainly, old chap," McKinley answered. "Parker and I have arranged to act as joint stewards in the purveying. We shall see you properly fed."

"Thanks, very much," Hay said. "And now, gentlemen, my time is up. Not another word will you drag out of me until six o'clock."

With that he lifted the pick and resumed his task.

As we left him Moore said: "I believe that Wood's manner to your friend has been a little abrupt. Until last night he looked on Hay's challenge as downright nonsense."

"Pardon me," Dr. McKinley interrupted. "Dr. Hay made no challenge. He merely accepted Mr. Wood's offer."

"Certainly. I put it wrongly. Wood has no idea how Hay will shape, but by facing the music he has already gone up 100 per cent. in his estimation." Raising his voice he continued, excitedly: "He deserves to pull it off, and I hope he will. I like to see a man appreciate a rival as he does. No bounce with him. I believe you have taken their measure. If Thomson is not careful he will run himself to a standstill. There is no leaving Broomcross for me until the

finish. Where are Hay's meals coming from? I understood he was your guest, doctor."

"He has engaged a room for the week at a cottage near the pit-mouth," the doctor replied.

Hay completed his three tons at 4.20. At six he had a wash and breakfast.

"Would you care to know how Thomson is doing?" Moore asked him.

"I would rather not. I might be enticed into attempting too much. I have asked my friends here to let me know on Wednesday how he stands, but not before," he answered.

"Capital!" Moore ejaculated. "Now, if you want anything just say the word."

"There is one favour that I have to ask," Hay answered. "For the last hour or more the miners have been coming about making remarks. They mean nothing by it, but I would prefer to have it stopped."

"That you shall," said Wood. "I'll see that none except those who have business here come into either your or Thomson's workings. Progress made can always be ascertained from the checker."

At half-past six the doctor recommenced. He took it leisurely at first in order not to retard digestion.

The stoppage of spectators was a small thing in itself, yet unintentionally Hay had scored a point over his opponent, who always put in better work in the midst of a sympathetic, applauding crowd.

Thomson meantime was making rapid headway. The redoubtable champion had also formulated a plan of campaign which might have proved successful against a man of ordinary calibre. His design was to put in a day's work of such astounding extent that his rival, seeing the hopelessness of his case, would abandon the contest. If that scheme failed, he must go on until the end, or until his opponent retired. While he realized that he might have some trouble with his man, the result, in his mind, was never for a moment in doubt. But he saw no reason for doing heavy work for a week if he could earn his £50 in a day. Naturally, in the shallower seam, his progress was less speedy. But even there, where the swing of his great pick was curtailed, so fast he wrought, that at eight o'clock, when, stretching out his great body, he emerged into the open, the second quantum of three tons stood to his credit. For eight hours he had toiled incessantly without food or sustenance, save an occasional draught of a mixture of stout and ale—not, by the way, the usual

miner's drink while at work. Thomson, too, breakfasted in the mine. His meal consisted of several cups of tea and three huge slices of fat bacon. A crowd of miners gathered round their oft-tried hero, and his soul feasted on their admiration and flattery.

It was known now that Dr. Hay was a miner of some skill, who had learned as much of coal-hewing in a few months as most men in a lifetime. All sorts of rumours as to the great issue at stake were in circulation, but the secret was well kept, and the mystery of it added zest to the entertainment. A Lanarkshire miner loves a bit of sport as much as any man. Defeat for their man was out of the question, but they hoped to see a stiff struggle to a finish.

Breakfast over, Thomson resumed, leading by nearly a ton and a half. He now entered upon the most arduous part of the task. Crouching down, with body tense, he hewed into the coal with sharp staccato strokes. It

Chacun à son goût.

A meal of coarse indigestible food, and he commenced another round. What a delight to the man the freedom once more to cleave the air with great sweeps of his pick instead of nibbling in a 3ft. seam. Hours ahead of his opponent, the match was surely his. Hay would never have the temerity, he thought, to persevere for another day. At nine o'clock he entered the 4ft. seam. By midnight his reckoning was 13 tons 8cwt., the equivalent of a usual day's work of three strong men—a feat without parallel. He knocked off for a few hours. On the checker saying to him that Hay had finished for the day at ten o'clock with 10 tons 4cwt. to his credit, he asked if he meant to come back.

"He's coming back right enough. He can stand a lot of gruelling yet, John," the checker answered. "He'll be here at four o'clock."

"So will I, then," Thomson said.

In the morning the rivals arrived within a few minutes of each other. The young doctor the earlier, fresh and fit, with a clean suit of clothing. To save his hands he wore gloves with the fingers cut off. In the week he wore out a dozen pairs. Both went straight to work. Thomson was rather stiff after the twenty-four hours' spell, but the stiffness soon wore off. A continuation of his previous day's form was impossible, but he continued to do great work. His master was down early.

"He is a harder nut to crack than we thought," he said to him, while Thomson was breakfasting.

"Aye, that he is," was all his answer. Already he was beginning to think that his fifty pounds would be hardly earned.

Without trace of braggadocio, Hay was quietly self-confident. Clean and neat, so far as his occupation permitted, undaunted by the long lead of his opponent, he kept steadily on.

Mr. Moore, McKinley, and I were again in company when the coal-master accosted us.

"Has Hay any chance whatever? Does he know how much leeway he has to recover?" he asked.

"There's a long road yet to travel," Moore replied. "I should not care to venture an opinion on the result. He is working to schedule—has a time-table made up for the week. He knows that Thomson is a long way ahead, but not the extent of his lead."



"CROUCHING DOWN, WITH BODY TENSE."

was work ill-suited for a man of his build; his great size was all against him. The inability to put in his best work was a source of continual mental irritation.

In the first stage the hutchies with loads of eight hundredweight or so were sent out at intervals of less than half an hour. Now an hour elapsed between each. Hour after hour he laboured with never a thought of food or rest. At three o'clock, when he heard from his hutch-boy that his score stood at 9 tons 1cwt., he heaved a mighty sigh of relief and left his working.

Again he was flattered to his heart's content. Do you wonder? Hero-worship—the adoration of physical strength—will never die. From Land's End to John-o'-Groats the country then was ringing with one name—Kitchener. "Pooh!" his fellows thought. "Who would place Lord Kitchener on a level with John Thomson?"

On through that day and the following, with six hours' sleep, and an occasional pause for food. About half-past nine on Wednesday evening, as he neared the end of his third complete round, Hay asked for a table showing each day's progress. At ten o'clock McKinley and I accompanied him to the cottage. After a wash and rub down with embrocation he went into the figures. The state prepared by the checker showed the progress of the men thus:—

	THOMSON.		HAY.	
	Tons.	Cwt.	Tons.	Cwt.
Monday	13	8	10	4
Tuesday (18hrs.) ...	8	9	8	8
Wednesday (") ...	7	16	8	9
Total	29	13	27	1

The table showed also a comparison of the working time at each seam. Thomson's record for the large seam was throughout better than the doctor's. At the medium they were about level, while at the narrow seam the positions at the high seam were reversed.

"Two tons and a half to the bad, and Thomson going weaker," Hay said, when he had examined the sheet. "I did not expect him to have such a commanding lead. What a marvel he is. Still, the advantage is more apparent than real. I start fresh at the 6ft.-seam; he will be at the 4ft. seam immediately." Jumping into bed while he spoke, "I am awfully obliged to you fellows for helping me. I hope we shall pull it off. Good-night."

In two minutes he was sleeping soundly.

III.

On Thursday morning at four o'clock the men were again at their posts. Hay, as usual, without trace of weariness, clean and spick. He gained steadily on his opponent, who now saw the necessity of changing his tactics. Perceiving that he was running himself to a standstill, Thomson resolved to take it more easily and recuperate for a little, even if Hay should get level in the interim. If so, then he, fresh, he thought, would meet Hay, tired, and by again running right away from him he would take the heart out of him.

And now the one absorbing theme in Broomcross and surrounding collieries was the match. At all hours of the day inquirers came to the pit-head. The most exaggerated rumours were current. It was known that Miss Wood received a bulletin twice daily, and it had become common report that she was the prize, as undoubtedly in a tale of fiction she would have been. The air of mystery which still enshrouded it gave additional relish to the conflict. The state of the scores, which gradually crept closer, pointed to an exciting finish. Hay was making even better progress than on the opening day. Overhauling Thomson so rapidly, he began to conceive that it was all over—that it was unnecessary to hold anything in reserve for the days to follow. He might have fallen into Thomson's trap but

for the folly of the latter, who gave his scheme away to the men, from whom we in turn heard it. Thereafter the doctor hewed with more regard to the future. The scores for the day, when at 10 p.m. they again laid aside their picks for six hours, were:—

Thomson—6 tons 2cwt.

Hay—8 tons 6cwt.

Total for four days:—

Thomson—35 tons 15cwt.

Hay—35 tons 7cwt.

On Friday morning Thomson completed his fourth round of the three seams at 4.40, Hay at 5.30. The rest had profited the Broomcross champion, who sent the splinters flying in his best style. He rushed out

his three tons from the 6ft. seam in about three hours and a half, as against Hay's four hours and a quarter. General opinion was against the doctor. It was forgotten that Thomson always had the advantage at the wide seam, Hay at the narrow. There was practically no work done in the mine, the miners being too much engaged in watching for the hitches of the pair.

In the second seam there was little between the men. Thomson continued to maintain his lead. In the 3ft. seam, if anywhere, lay Hay's salvation. He entered it an hour and a half behind Thomson. A change came o'er the scene. The young doctor's loads came out the oftener; his score steadily crept up. At 9.45 he was level.



"AT ALL HOURS OF THE DAY
INCREASED CASE."

At ten, Dr. McKinley asked if he intended stopping for the day.

"No, no," he answered, a shade of impatience in his tone. "I shall go right on to the finish now. This seam is my trump card; I must play it."

Hay completed his fifth round a few minutes after midnight, Thomson thirty-five minutes later. For the sake of comparison I give the scores at ten o'clock:—

	HAY.	THOMSON.
Friday	8 tons 19cwt. ...	8 tons 10cwt.
Total for five days	44 tons 6cwt. ...	44 tons 5cwt.

What must have been their sensations as in semi-darkness through the long hours of that night these men, weary but determined, hewed on!

At six o'clock on Saturday morning—the last day of that memorable contest—Mr. Wood joined Mr. Moore, McKinley, and myself. We three had seldom been apart during the week. Already more than two hundred souls were in the mine, all deeply absorbed in the varying fortunes of the game. Not a man among them would handle pick, or jumper, or blasting charge that day. In little groups, some in working, some in holiday, attire, they stood discussing the situation. I have said that they longed for a stiff struggle. Surely they had their wish. What was boxing match or Cup-tie final to this? Hours of thrilling excitement, and the issue still hanging in the balance. All through that long night the contestants had toiled, both sadly in need of rest, but each fearful to stay his hand for an instant. For ten hours or more the advantage on either side had never exceeded a quarter of a ton; and now at this crucial stage, while Hercules led by exactly four hundredweight, the advantage was neutralized for the reason that they were about to move to the narrower seams, where Hay always recovered lost ground.

The severity of the struggle was plainly evident. Thomson was as if dazed. His blows lacked the old fire. Yet in his exhausted condition he was doing good work on the black wall. At the beginning he had held his body rigid; in his weakness he swung himself forward with each blow, and so utilized his weight, as Hay had done throughout. His girth seemed to have shrunk. While he had acted as oversman his hands had lost some of their horniness. Raw and bleeding now, they must have caused him intense suffering, but still with heroic pluck and resolution he struggled on.

Hay was using a fresh pick, weighing only
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a pound and three-quarters, the lightest he could lay hands on. His agility, his litheness, were gone. The terrible strain of that stretch of twenty-six hours had told severely upon him, in the pink of condition though he was. His face was black with grit, his eyes bloodshot. He worked unevenly, without the former rhythmical swing.

Of the two Thomson seemed to be in sorrier plight, but there was little to choose between them.

"What do you think of your son-in-law now?" Moore asked Wood. "Is he man enough for you?"

"By Heaven," Wood answered, clapping his knee with his right hand to emphasize his statement, "I'd sooner my girl marry him than a king. And she shall too, before the year is out." He wheeled round and spoke to McKinley. "Tell me, doctor, will this harm him? If so, I'll stop it now."

"Not a bit. He will be all right by Monday," the doctor replied. "He was in perfect training when he started. If you stop it, you will have to give him his partnership, you know."

"He has earned that already, and a handsome apology to boot. Thomson, too, his fifty pounds."

Moore said here: "You can't expect him to do a miner's work again—can you, Wood? If you stop it now, nobody will be satisfied. If he wins, and he ought to, he'll be the most popular mine-owner on Clydeside. Mark my words that, when a strike is on the carpet, he'll have more influence than any three miner's agents. He may save you and all of us thousands of pounds in the future. The doctor can keep his eye on them, and if he scents danger for either, stop it."

Thomson had now gone to the medium seam, and in a few minutes Dr. Hay sent his last hatch-load from the 6ft. way.

"How much is he ahead?" he asked us.

"Half an hour," the doctor replied.

"I'll risk twenty minutes for a wash and some breakfast," he said. "I must apologize, gentlemen, for my disreputable appearance."

He breakfasted on coffee, soft-boiled eggs, and toast, and, handicapped by fifty-five minutes, began the stern chase.

How eagerly every man in the pit looked out for the hatch-boys wheeling their precious loads, and plied the lads for gossip of their chiefs. Excitement waxed intenser as the hours ran on. Slowly but steadily the champion was being overhauled, the doctor's hatches coming out the faster. Who could

foretell the ultimate result? Thomson was still favourite with his fellows, but the game was anybody's.

At ten o'clock the full score stood:—

Thomson	49 tons 9cwt.
Hay	49 tons 3cwt.

At noon Thomson had fifty tons to his credit; Hay, 3cwt. less.

Hay rested occasionally, Thomson never. Even his food he swallowed to the accompaniment of the pick. At half-past one his hutch-boy told him that Hay was leading. He drank a glass of brandy and washed away the taste with a long draught of beer. Invigorated for a time, he hewed to such good purpose that once more he gave his rival the go-by.

Two-forty saw him in the narrowest seam. Hay followed in fifteen minutes. At four o'clock the game, as near as could be, stood all square, both utterly fagged out, but striving on as if for life and death. Another dose of his medicine, and Thomson regained supremacy, only to be dispossessed of the lead in an hour.

In a fever of expectancy the crowd waited on. Would one or both of these giants of the mine collapse before the midnight hour, and which? Could this mad struggle continue, and who would emerge victorious?

At six o'clock Hay sat, resting. A hutch-load from his and Thomson's workings had gone simultaneously to the pit-head. His hutch-boy reported that he held a lead of 2cwt. His head was swimming, he was woefully exhausted. In his dire distress he had one comfort. His opponent was, at least, in as sorry plight as he. Ten minutes' rest he would allow himself, and then on again so long as he could handle his pick.

Even as he rested Thomson's huge form, crouching to avoid the roof, came staggering in. He half fell, half sat, down beside Hay.

"I'm beat. I canna lift my pick," he said, mournfully. "I give you best. Will you shake hands, sir?"

They shook. The match was ended.

They sat in silence for five minutes, pulling themselves together before leaving the low-ceiled working. A crowd of men collected as they came into the deeper passage. The quartette, of which I formed one, pressed forward in time to hear Thomson, half a sob in his voice, addressing the miners:—

"I'm beat," he said. "I've met my better. Give him three cheers, my lads."

I vow there wasn't a man who heard that short speech who did not deem Thomson greater in defeat than in victory.

It is something to remember how those miners gave tongue and cheered victor and vanquished, while the vault of coal echoed and re-echoed the swelling sounds until it seemed like a roll of thunder.

After Thomson, Mr. Wood was first to congratulate Hay. He had a hurried conference with him and Thomson, at the end of which he spoke to his men.

"Now, my men," he said, "we don't want to have the roof tumbling down about our heads. But I ask you all to come to the Broomcross Hall at eight to-night to meet your new master. We'll have a smoke and a song, and drink his health."

Hay went from the mine to Dr. McKinley's, where a hot bath and a rub down with embrocation took much of the stiffness out of his limbs. A pick-me-up which his host composed, and insisted on his taking, pulled him round wonderfully. Dressed, he was in appearance the old Hay—the Hay I had met four months

previously. The only difference was in his hands, which had lost some of their whiteness.

Before proceeding to Mr. Wood's impromptu smoker we had tea in Dr. McKinley's half-parlour, half-smoking room—altogether snugery.

"Ah, Hay!" said Dr. McKinley. "You are indeed a lucky man. Two partnerships fairly and squarely earned in one short week. How do you think you will hit it with old Wood? As to the partnership with Miss Wood, there can only be one result—happiness to both."



"THOMSON'S HUGE FORM CAME STAGGERING IN."

"The surest foundation for a successful partnership," Hay replied, "is mutual respect. I have, I think, earned Wood's respect now. I have throughout appreciated his sterling worth. He has attained his present position through hard, honest work. Any personal rudeness was because of his exceeding fear lest his daughter should be gathered in by an impecunious fortune-hunter. We must remember that she is his only child, and make allowance. It is——"

But here a maid, a grin on her face and a coin in her hand, opened the door of the room, and Mr. Wood walked in.

"It's almost beyond belief," the coal king said, after a long look at his son-in-law-elect. "Here you are, just as if you had come out of a band-box. No offence, my lad—we are all friends here. Well, Dr. Hay, I owe you the biggest apology that I can think of, and I'm hanged if I know what to say. You are a gentleman, and, what I value more, you've proved yourself a *man*, and I'm prouder than I can tell you to think that you're to marry my girl and join me in the business. I will apologize to you to-night for all the hard things I've said of you to Thomson and the men, and after that I hope you'll let bygones be bygones, doctor, and we'll have a wedding as soon as you like."

"I have a better plan than that," Hay replied. "Let bygones be bygones now. The fault was on both sides, and, confound it all, I'll not have my private affairs discussed by all the village. Just be a dutiful father-in-law for once and say no more about it.

Don't you think that the choice of the happy day should rest with Mary?"

"You are right, my boy. I brought her with me to help me through with it. She is in the drawing-room waiting for you. Ten minutes only, though! We are due at the hall, then."

The doctor needed no second bidding.

"Oh, Colin," Miss Wood said, five minutes later, her face covered with rosy blushes. "I knew you would win, and I'm sure the dad wished all the week that you would. When it was finished he drove home at a gallop. You know what a terrible man he is. I dare not disobey him. He made me promise to ask you to marry me before the end of the year."

"And why not, sweetheart mine?" he answered. "Please the old dad and make me supremely happy by fixing the day now."

Miss Wood was a dutiful daughter, her lover's arguments were irresistible, and she named a certain day of Christmas-week.

At eight o'clock the village hall was densely packed. Mr. Wood and a few friends were on the platform. The mine-owner occupied a central seat. Colin Hay sat at his right hand, Thomson, both hands bandaged, at his left. When the glasses were charged and the pipes filled, Mr. Wood introduced them to his future partner and son-in-law amid cheering prolonged and indescribable. He told them in a few words sufficient of how the contest had arisen to cast a glamour over Dr. Hay for the remainder of his days.

John Thomson was an honoured guest at the wedding.



Made of Money.

By GEORGE DOLLAR.

Illustrations from Photos. by Geo. Newman, Limited.



THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.
Made of macerated money, value \$50,000 (£2,000).



OME men, it is said, are made of money. The men pictured in these pages certainly are. But whoever heard of cats, dogs, shoes, birds, hats, jugs, and monuments being made of money? It seems ridiculous, but the few words that follow, as well as the pictures

of these embodiments of wealth, may be accepted as truth.

To put the thing in a nutshell, they are made entirely from the macerated pulp of condemned American paper money. A one-legged soldier of the late Civil War, Mr. Henry Martin, of Anacostia, District of Columbia, has been making them for about



LINCOLN.
Estimated value \$10,000 (£2,000).



PRESIDENT MCKINLEY.
Value \$10,000 (£2,000).

eighteen years, turning out a hundred a day, and consuming two tons of pulp a year. Two or three million have thus been manufactured, and have been sold to visitors in Washington and elsewhere. The little souvenirs, in fact, stare at you from nearly every window in the Capitol, and the ten or fifteen cents for which they sell apiece has made them a most popular and curious memento of a Washington trip.

Some time ago we reproduced in our "Curiosities" department a bust of George Washington manufactured from this pulp. The likeness was very striking, and the bust pleased the public. Washington, therefore, was quickly followed by busts of the more noteworthy Presidents, two of whom—Lincoln and McKinley—are reproduced here-with. They sold extensively. But Mr. Martin, in the last year or two, has hit upon the happy idea of repre-



WASHINGTON.
Value \$2,000 (£400).

senting the buildings of Washington. His little view of the Capitol, mounted with coloured ribbon, is a pretty piece of work. Not the least interesting thing about it, moreover, is the fact that its 8 x 5 in. surface represents \$10,000 in money.

The stuff in Lincoln and McKinley represents \$20,000, the cat in the basket represents \$2,000, and the insignificant feline represents a like amount of good dollar bills in her fat little body. The jug is estimated at \$5,000, the Cinderella slipper at \$5,000,



WASHINGTON.
Value \$2,000 (£400).

Little attempt is made to be artistic in these figures on account of the trifle at which they are sold. The manufacturer makes the



CINDERELLA'S SLIPPER.
Value \$5,000 (£1,000).

designs himself and moulds them with his own machinery. The pulp is obtained from the Treasury Department.

The redemption division of that department has charge, among other things, of exchanging old money for new, the old money coming from banks in all parts of the United States and from Sub-Treasuries in several cities. The principle of redemption is simple. Every old dollar received means that a new one must be paid out, and for a new dollar paid out an old one must have been received.

The career of a rejected



THE JUG.
Value \$5,000 (£1,000).

dollar from redemption to destruction is interesting. It comes with others in sealed packages, which are counted, and then put up in new packages each containing one hundred bills. Four big holes are then punched in each package. A huge knife now cuts the package lengthwise, and the sections are sent to two different officials for verification. From beginning to end, in fact, the whole process is nothing but checking and counter-checking by different officials in order that absolute accuracy may be established. The experts are constantly on the look-out for counterfeits, and with all this supervision by different trained eyes, it is rare that a counterfeit or a raised note is missed. When all is done, the mass of money is ready for its final conversion into pulp.

The macerator, a large spherical receptacle of steel, contains water and a number of closely joined knives, which in their revolution grind the money to an excessive fineness. Every day at one o'clock three officials meet at the macerator, and the condemned money is placed therein. The operation thus goes on from day to day. The officials unlock the macerator and the liquid pulp falls to be drained in a pit below. The residue, a wet and whitish-grey mass, is then disposed



WASHINGTON BAT.
Value \$2,000 (£1,000).



THE AMERICAN EAGLE.
Value \$4,000 (£2,000).

stroyed in one day was \$151,000,000, consisting of national bank-notes and United States bonds. This occurred on June 27, 1894.

of, either to be sold for book-binders' boards or for the souvenirs here shown. The characteristic green colour of the money has disappeared, and nothing remains of the greenback in the souvenir except an occasional letter or number partly destroyed which figured in some one of the bills. Notwithstanding the millions of these

souvenirs which have been manufactured—representing, as they do, billions of money—the output of pulp in this form is but a tittle compared with the total output of macerated pulp. The capacity of the macerator is one ton, and the average amount destroyed each day is \$1,000,000. The largest amount ever de-

stroyed in one day was \$151,000,000, consisting of national bank-notes and United States bonds. This occurred on June 27, 1894. In early days the condemned money was burned, but owing to the impossibility of putting every bill beyond the possibility of detection, the macerator was adopted.

To-day it would be impossible for the most skilful manipulator to make a five-dollar bill out of one of these souvenirs.

This, of course, does not include the dealers, who have already made lots out of them on account of their popularity.



THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT.
Value \$1,000 (£1,000).



By E. NESBIT.

THIS is the tale of the wonders that befell on the evening of the 11th of December, when they did what they were told not to do. You may think that you know all the unpleasant things that could possibly happen to you if you are disobedient, but there are some things which even you do not know, and they did not know them either.

Their names were George and Jane.

There were no fireworks that year on Guy Fawkes' Day, because the heir to the throne was not well. He was cutting his first tooth, and that is a very anxious time for any person—even for a Royal one. He was really very poorly, so that fireworks would have been in the worst possible taste, even at Land's End or in the Isle of Man, whilst in Forest Hill, which was the home of Jane and George, anything of the kind was quite out of the question. Even the Crystal Palace, empty-headed as it is, felt that this was no time for Catherine-wheels.

But when the Prince had cut his tooth, rejoicings were not only admissible but correct, and the 11th of December was proclaimed firework day. All the people were most anxious to show their loyalty, and

to enjoy themselves at the same time. So there were fireworks and torchlight processions, and set-pieces at the Crystal Palace, with "Blessings on our Prince" and "Long Live our Royal Darling" in different coloured fires; and the most private of boarding schools had a half-holiday; and even the children of plumbers and authors had tuppence each given them to spend as they liked.

George and Jane had sixpence each—and they spent the whole amount in a "golden rain," which would not light for ever so long, and, when it did light, went out almost at once, so they had to look at the fireworks in the gardens next door, and at the ones at the Crystal Palace, which were very glorious indeed.

All their relations had colds in their heads, so Jane and George were allowed to go out into the garden alone to let off their firework. Jane had put on her fur cape and her thick gloves, and her hood with the silver-fox fur on it which was made out of mother's old muff; and George had his overcoat with the three capes, and his comforter, and father's sealskin travelling cap with the pieces that come down over your ears.

It was dark in the garden, but the fireworks all about made it seem very gay, and though the children were cold they were quite sure that they were enjoying themselves.

They got up on the fence at the end of the garden to see better; and then they saw, very far away, where the edge of the dark world is, a shining line of straight, beautiful lights arranged in a row, as if they were the spears carried by a fairy army.

"Oh, how pretty," said Jane. "I wonder what they are. It looks as if the fairies were planting little shining baby poplar trees, and watering them with liquid light."

"Liquid fiddlestick!" said George. He had been to school, so he knew that these were only the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights. And he said so.

"But what is the Rory Bory what's-its-name?" asked Jane. "Who lights it, and what's it there for?"

George had to own that he had not learnt that.

"But I know," said he, "that it has something to do with the Great Bear, and the Dipper, and the Plough, and Charles's Wain."

"And what are they?" asked Jane.

"Oh, they're the surnames of some of the star families. There goes a jolly rocket," answered George, and Jane felt as if she almost understood about the star families.

The fairy spears of light twinkled and gleamed; they were much prettier than the big, blaring, blazing bonfire that was smoking and flaming and spluttering in the next-door-but-one garden—prettier even than the coloured fires at the Crystal Palace.

"I wish we could see them nearer," Jane said. "I wonder if the star families are nice families—the kind that mother would like us to go to tea with, if we were little stars?"

"They aren't that sort of families at all, Silly," said her brother, kindly trying to explain. "I only said 'families' because a kid like you wouldn't have understood if I'd said constel. . . . and, besides, I've forgotten the end of the word. Anyway, the stars are all up in the sky, so you can't go to tea with them."

"No," said Jane; "I said if we were little stars."

"But we aren't," said George.

"No," said Jane, with a sigh. "I know that. I'm not so stupid as you think, George. But the Tory Bories are somewhere at the edge. Couldn't we go and see them?"

"Considering you're eight, you haven't

much sense." George kicked his boots against the paling to warm his toes. "It's half the world away."

"It looks very near," said Jane, hunching up her shoulders to keep her neck warm.

"They're close to the North Pole," said George. "Look here—I don't care a straw about the Aurora Borealis, but I shouldn't mind discovering the North Pole: it's awfully difficult and dangerous, and then you come home and write a book about it with a lot of pictures, and everybody says how brave you are."

Jane got off the fence.

"Oh, George, let's," she said. "We shall never have such a chance again—all alone by ourselves—and quite late, too."

"I'd go right enough if it wasn't for you," George answered, gloomily, "but you know they always say I lead you into mischief—and if we went to the North Pole we should get our boots wet, as likely as not, and you remember what they said about not going on the grass."

"They said the *lawn*," said Jane. "We're not going on the *lawn*. Oh, George, do, do let's. It doesn't look so very far—we could be back before they had time to get dreadfully angry."

"All right," said George, "but mind I don't want to go."

So off they went. They got over the fence, which was very cold and white and shiny because it was beginning to freeze, and on the other side of the fence was somebody else's garden, so they got out of that as quickly as they could, and beyond that was a field where there was another big bonfire, with people standing round it who looked quite black.

"It's like Indians," said George, and wanted to stop and look, but Jane pulled him on, and they passed by the bonfire and got through a gap in the hedge into another field—a dark one; and far away, beyond quite a number of other dark fields, the Northern Lights shone and sparkled and twinkled.

Now, during the winter the Arctic regions come much farther south than they are marked on the map. Very few people know this, though you would think they could tell it by the ice in the jugs of a morning. And just when George and Jane were starting for the North Pole, the Arctic regions had come down very nearly as far as Forest Hill, so that, as the children walked on, it grew colder and colder, and presently they saw that the fields were covered with snow, and there were great icicles hanging from all the hedges and

gates. And the Northern Lights still seemed "some way off."

They were crossing a very rough, snowy field when Jane first noticed the animals. There were white rabbits and white hares, and all sorts and sizes of white birds, and some larger creatures in the shadows of the hedges which Jane was sure were wolves and bears.

"Polar bears and Arctic wolves, of course I mean," she said, for she did not want George to think her stupid again.

There was a great hedge at the end of this field, all covered with snow and icicles; but the children found a place where there was a hole, and as no bears or wolves seemed to be just in that part of the hedge, they crept through and scrambled out of the frozen ditch on the other side. And then they stood still and held their breath with wonder.

For in front of them, running straight and smooth right away to the Northern Lights, lay a great wide road of pure dark ice, and on each side were tall trees all sparkling with white frost, and from the boughs of the trees hung strings of stars threaded on fine moonbeams, and shining so brightly that it was like a beautiful fairy daylight. Jane said so; but George said it was like the electric lights at the Earl's Court Exhibition.

The rows of trees went as straight as ruled lines away—away and away—and at the other end of them shone the Aurora Borealis.

There was a sign-post—of silvery snow—and on it in letters of pure ice the children read:—

"This way to the North Pole."

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Then George said: "Way or no way, I know a slide when I see one—so here goes." And he took a run on the frozen snow, and Jane took a run when she saw him do it, and the next moment they were sliding away, each with feet half a yard apart, along the great slide that leads to the North Pole.

This great slide is made for the convenience of the Polar bears, who, during the winter months, get their food from the Army and Navy Stores—and it is the most perfect slide in the world. If you have never come across it, it is because you have never let off fireworks on the 11th of December, and have never been thoroughly naughty and disobedient. But do not be these things in the hope of finding the great slide—because you might find something quite different, and then you would be sorry.

The great slide is like common slides in this, that when once you have started you have to go on to the end—unless you fall down—and then it hurts just as much as the smaller kind on ponds. The great slide runs down-hill all the way, so that you keep on going faster and faster and faster. George and Jane went so fast that they had not time to notice the scenery. They only saw the long lines of frosted trees and the starry lamps, and, on each side, rushing back as they slid on—a very broad, white world and a very large, black night; and overhead, as well as in the trees, the stars were bright like silver lamps, and, far ahead, shone and trembled and sparkled the line of fairy spears. Jane said that; and George said,



"THIS WAY TO THE NORTH POLE."

"I can see the Northern Lights quite plain."

It is very pleasant to slide and slide and slide on clear, dark ice—especially if you feel you are really going somewhere, and more especially if that somewhere is the North Pole. The children's feet made no noise on the ice, and they went on and on in a beautiful white silence. But suddenly the silence was shattered and a cry rang out over the snow.

"Hi! You there! Stop!"

"Tumble for your life!" cried George, and he fell down at once, because it is the only way to stop. Jane fell on top of him—and then they crawled on hands and knees to the snow at the edge of the slide—and there was a sportsman, dressed in a peaked cap and a frozen moustache, like the one you see in the pictures about Ice-Peter, and he had a gun in his hand.

"You don't happen to have any bullets about you?" said he.

"No," George said, truthfully. "I had five of father's revolver cartridges, but they were taken away the day nurse turned out my pockets to see if I had taken the knob of the bathroom door by mistake."

"Quite so," said the sportsman, "these accidents will occur. You don't carry fire-arms, then, I presume?"

"I haven't any fire-arms," said George, "but I have a fire-torch. It's only a squib one of the boys gave me, if that's any good"; and he began to feel among the string, and peppermints, and buttons, and tops, and nibs, and chalk, and foreign postage-stamps in his knickerbocker pockets.

"One could but try," the sportsman replied, and he held out his hand.

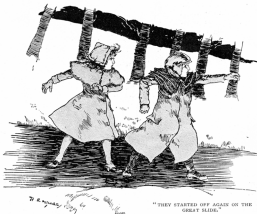
But Jane pulled at her brother's jacket-tail, and whispered, "Ask him what he wants it for."

So then the sportsman had to confess that he wanted the firework to kill the white grouse with; and, when they came to look, there was the white grouse himself, sitting in the snow, looking quite pale and care-worn, and waiting anxiously for the matter to be decided one way or the other.

George put all the things back in his pockets, and said, "No, I sha'n't. The season for shooting him stopped yesterday—I heard father say so—so it wouldn't be fair, anyhow. I'm very sorry; but I can't—so there!"

The sportsman said nothing, only he shook his fist at Jane, and then he got on the slide and tried to go towards the Crystal Palace—which was not easy, because that way is up-hill. So they left him trying, and went on.

Before they started the white grouse thanked them in a few pleasant, well-chosen words, and then they took a sideways slanting run, and started off again on the great slide,



"THEY STARTED OFF AGAIN ON THE GREAT SLIDE."

and so away towards the North Pole and the twinkling, beautiful lights.

The great slide went on and on, and the lights did not seem to come much nearer, and the white silence wrapped them round as they slid along the wide, icy path. Then once again the silence was broken to bits by someone calling:—

"Hi! You there! Stop!"

"Tumble for your life!" cried George, and

tumbled as before, stopping in the only possible way, and Jane stopped on top of him, and they crawled to the edge, and came suddenly on the butterfly collector who was looking for specimens with a pair of blue glasses, and a blue net, and a blue book with coloured plates.

"Excuse me," said the collector, "but have you such a thing as a needle about you—a very long needle?"

"I have a needle-book," replied Jane, politely, "but there aren't any needles in it

had to own that he wanted the pin to stick through the great Arctic moth, "a magnificent specimen," he added, "which I am most anxious to preserve."

And there, sure enough, in the collector's butterfly-net sat the great Arctic moth listening attentively to the conversation.

"Oh, I couldn't!" cried Jane. And while George was explaining to the collector that they would really rather not, Jane opened the blue folds of the butterfly-net, and asked the moth, quietly, if it would please step outside for a moment. And it did.

When the collector saw that the moth was free, he seemed less angry than grieved.

"Well, well," said he, "here's a whole Arctic expedition thrown away! I shall have to go home and fit out another. And that means a lot of writing to the papers and things. You seem to be a singularly thoughtless little girl."

So they went on, leaving him, too, trying

to go up-hill towards the Crystal Palace.

When the great white Arctic moth had returned thanks in a suitable speech, George and Jane took a sideways slanting run and started sliding again, between the star-lamps along the great slide, towards the North Pole. They

went faster and faster, and the lights ahead grew brighter and brighter—so that they could not keep their eyes open, but had to blink and wink as they went—and then suddenly the great slide ended in an immense heap of snow, and George and Jane shot right into it because they could not stop themselves, and the snow was soft so that they went in up to their very ears.

When they had picked themselves out, and thumped each other on the back to get rid of the snow, they shaded their eyes and looked, and there, right in front of them, was the wonder of wonders—the North Pole—towering high and white and glistening, like an ice-lighthouse, and it was quite, quite



"HAVE YOU SUCH A THING AS A NEEDLE ABOUT YOU?"

now. George took them all to do the things with pieces of cork—in the 'Boy's Own Scientific Experimenter' and 'The Young Mechanic.' He did not do the things, but he did for the needles."

"Curiously enough," said the collector, "I, too, wished to use the needle in connection with cork."

"I have a hat-pin in my hood," said Jane. "I fastened the fur with it when it caught in the nail on the greenhouse door. It is very long and sharp—would that do?"

"One could but try," said the collector, and Jane began to feel for the pin. But George pinched her arm and whispered, "Ask what he wants it for." Then the collector

close, so that you had to put your head as far back as it would go, and farther, before you could see the high top of it. It was made entirely of ice. You will hear grown-up people talk a great deal of nonsense about the North Pole, and when you are grown-up, it is even possible that you may talk nonsense about it yourself (the most unlikely things do happen); but deep down in your heart you must always remember that the North Pole is made of clear ice, and could not possibly, if you come to think of it, be made of anything else.

All round the Pole, making a bright ring about it, were hundreds of little fires, and the flames of them did not flicker and twist, but went up blue and green and rosy and straight like the stalks of dream lilies.

Jane said so, but George said they were as straight as ramrods.

And these flames were the Aurora Borealis—which the children had seen as far away as Forest Hill.

The ground was quite flat, and covered with smooth, hard snow, which shone and sparkled like the top of a birthday cake which has been iced at home. The ones done at the shops do not shine and sparkle, because they mix flour with the icing-sugar.

"It is like a dream," said Jane.

And George said, "It *is* the North Pole. Just think of the fuss people always make about getting here—and it was no trouble at all, really."

"I daresay lots of people have got here," said Jane, dismally; "it's not the getting *here*—I see that—it's the getting back again. Perhaps no one will ever know that we have been here, and the robins will cover us with leaves and—"

"Nonsense," said George, "there aren't any robins, and there aren't any leaves. It's just the North Pole, that's all, and I've found

it; and now I shall try to climb up and plant the British flag on the top—my handkerchief will do; and if it really *is* the North Pole, my pocket-compass Uncle James gave me will spin round and round, and then I shall know. Come on."

So Jane came on; and when they got close to the clear, tall, beautiful flames they saw that there was a great, queer-shaped lump of ice all round the bottom of the Pole—clear, smooth, shining ice, that was deep, beautiful Prussian blue, like icebergs, in the thick parts, and all sorts of wonderful, glimmery, shimmery, changing colours in the thin parts, like the cut-glass chandelier in grandmamma's house in London.

"It is a very curious shape," said Jane; "it's almost like"—she drew back a step to get a better view of it—"it's almost like a dragon."

"It's much more like the lamp-posts on the Thames Embankment," said George, who had noticed a curly thing like a tail that went twisting up the North Pole.

"Oh, George," cried Jane, "it *is* a dragon; I can see its wings. Whatever shall we do?"

And, sure enough, it *was* a dragon—a great, shining, winged, scaly, clawy, big-mouthed dragon—made of pure ice. It



"SURE ENOUGH, IT WAS A DRAGON."

must have gone to sleep curled round the hole where the warm steam used to come up from the middle of the earth, and then when the earth got colder, and the column of steam froze and was turned into the North Pole, the dragon must have got frozen in his sleep—frozen too hard to move—and there he stayed. And though he was very terrible he was very beautiful, too.

Jane said so, but George said, "Oh, don't bother; I'm thinking how to get on to the Pole and try the compass without waking the brute."

The dragon certainly was beautiful, with his deep, clear Prussian-blueness, and his rainbow-coloured glitter. And rising from within the cold coil of the frozen dragon the North Pole shot up like a pillar made of one great diamond, and every now and then it cracked a little, from sheer coldness. The sound of the cracking was the only thing that broke the great white silence in the midst of which the dragon lay like an enormous jewel, and the straight flames went up all round him like the stalks of tall lilies.

And as the children stood there looking at the most wonderful sight their eyes had ever seen, there was a soft padding of feet and a hurry-scurry behind them, and from the outside darkness beyond the flame-stalks came a crowd of little brown creatures running, jumping, scrambling, tumbling head over heels, and on all fours, and some even walking on their heads. They caught hands as they came near the fires, and danced round in a ring.

"It's bears," said Jane; "I know it is. Oh, how I wish we hadn't come; and my boots are so wet."

The dancing-ring broke up suddenly, and the next moment hundreds of furry arms clutched at George and Jane, and they found themselves in the middle of a great, soft, heaving crowd of little fat people in brown fur dresses, and the white silence was quite gone.

"Bears, indeed," cried a shrill voice; "you'll wish we were bears before you've done with us."

This sounded so dreadful, that Jane began to cry. Up to now the children had only seen the most beautiful and wondrous things, but now they began to be sorry they had done what they were told not to, and the difference between "lawn" and "grass" did not seem so great as it had done at Forest Hill.

Directly Jane began to cry, all the brown people started back. No one cries in the

Arctic regions for fear of being struck so by the frost. So that these people had never seen anyone cry before.

"Don't cry *really*," whispered George, "or you'll get chilblains in your eyes. But pretend to howl—it frightens them."

So Jane went on pretending to howl, and the real crying stopped: it always does when you begin to pretend. You try it.

Then, speaking very loud so as to be heard over the howls of Jane, George said: "Yah—who's afraid? We are George and Jane—who are you?"

"We are the sealskin dwarfs," said the brown people, twisting their furry bodies in and out of the crowd like the changing glass in kaleidoscopes; "we are very precious and expensive, for we are made, throughout, of the very best sealskin."

"And what are those fires for?" bellowed George—for Jane was crying louder and louder.

"Those," shouted the dwarfs, coming a step nearer, "are the fires we make to thaw the dragon. He is frozen now—so he sleeps curled up round the Pole—but when we have thawed him with our fires he will wake up and go and eat everybody in the world except us."

"Whatever—do—you—want—him—to—do—that—for?" yelled George.

"Oh—just for spite," bawled the dwarfs, carelessly—as if they were saying "Just for fun."

Jane left off crying to say: "You are heartless."

"No, we aren't," they said; "our hearts are made of the finest sealskin, just like little fat sealskin purses—"

And they all came a step nearer. They were very fat and round. Their bodies were like sealskin jackets on a very stout person; their heads were like sealskin muffs; their legs were like sealskin boas; and their hands and feet were like sealskin tobacco-pouches. And their faces were like seals' faces, inasmuch as they, too, were covered with sealskin.

"Thank you so much for telling us," said George. "Good evening. (Keep on howling, Jane!)"

But the dwarfs came a step nearer, muttering and whispering. Then the muttering stopped—and there was a silence so deep that Jane was afraid to howl in it. But it was a brown silence, and she had liked the white silence better.

Then the chief dwarf came quite close and said: "What's that on your head?"

And George felt it was all up—for he knew it was his father's sealskin cap.

The dwarf did not wait for an answer. "It's made of one of *us*," he screamed, "or else one of the seals; our poor relations. Boy, now your fate is sealed!"

And looking at the wicked seal-faces all around them George and Jane felt that their fate was sealed indeed.

The dwarfs seized the children in their furry arms. George kicked, but it is no use

had twenty times as many clothes to feel small and prickly inside of.

The sealskin dwarfs tied George and Jane to the North Pole, and, as they had no ropes, they bound them with snow-wreaths, which are very strong when they are made in the proper way, and they heaped up the fires very close and said:—

"Now the dragon will get warm, and when he gets warm he will wake, and when he wakes he will be hungry, and when he is hungry he will begin to eat, and the first thing he will eat will be *you*."

The little, sharp, many-coloured flames sprang up like the stalks of dream lilies, but no heat came to the children, and they grew colder and colder.

"We sha'n't be very nice when the dragon does eat us, that's one comfort," said George; "we shall be turned into ice long before that."

Suddenly there was a flapping of wings, and the white grouse perched on the dragon's head and said:—

"Can I be of any assistance?"

Now by this time the children were so cold, so cold, so very, very cold, that they had forgotten everything but that, and they could say nothing else. So the white grouse said:—

"One moment. I am only too grateful for this opportunity of showing my sense of

your manly conduct about the firework!"

And the next moment there was a soft whispering rustle of wings overhead, and then, fluttering slowly, softly down, came hundreds and thousands of little white fluffy feathers. They fell on George and Jane like snowflakes, and, like flakes of fallen snow lying one above another, they grew into a thicker and thicker covering, so that presently the children were buried under a heap of white feathers, and only their faces peeped out.

"Oh, you dear, good, kind white grouse," said Jane; "but you'll be cold yourself, won't you, now you have given us all your pretty dear feathers?"

The white grouse laughed, and his laugh was echoed by thousands of kind, soft bird-voices.

"Did you think all those feathers came out of one breast? There are hundreds and hundreds of us here, and every one of us can



"THE DWARFS SEIZED THE CHILDREN."

kicking sealskin, and Jane howled, but the dwarfs were getting used to that. They climbed up the dragon's side and dumped the children down on his icy spine, with their backs against the North Pole. You have no idea how cold it was—the kind of cold that makes you feel small and prickly inside your clothes, and makes you wish you

spare a little tuft of soft breast feathers to help to keep two kind little hearts warm!"

Thus spoke the grouse, who certainly had very pretty manners.

So now the children snuggled under the feathers and were warm, and when the sealskin dwarfs tried to take the feathers away, the grouse and his friends flew in their faces with flappings and screams, and drove the dwarfs back. They are a cowardly folk.

The dragon had not moved yet—but then he might at any moment get warm enough to move, and though George and Jane were now warm they were not comfortable, nor easy in their minds. They tried to explain to the grouse; but though he is polite, he is not clever, and he only said:—

"You've got a warm nest, and we'll see that no one takes it from you. What more can you possibly want?"

Just then came a new, strange, jerky fluttering, of wings far softer than the grouse's, and George and Jane cried out together:—

"Oh, *do* mind your wings in the fires!"

For they saw at once that it was the great white Arctic moth.

"What's the matter?" he asked, settling on the dragon's tail.

So they told him.

"Sealskin, are they?" said the moth; "just you wait a minute!"

He flew off very crookedly, dodging the flames, and presently he came back, and there were so many moths with him that it was as if a live sheet of white wingedness were suddenly drawn between the children and the stars.

And then the doom of the bad sealskin dwarfs fell suddenly on them.

For the great sheet of winged whiteness broke up and fell, as snow falls, and it fell upon the sealskin dwarfs; and every snowflake of it was a live, fluttering, hungry moth, that buried its greedy nose deep in the sealskin fur.

Grown-up people will tell you that it is not moths but moths' children who eat fur—but this is only when they are trying to deceive you. When they are not thinking about you they say, "I fear the moths have got at my ermine tippet," or, "Your poor Aunt Emma had a lovely sable cloak, but it was eaten by moths." And now there were more moths than have ever been together in this world before, all settling on the sealskin dwarfs.

The dwarfs did not see their danger till it was too late. Then they called for camphor and bitter apple, and oil of lavender, and yellow soap and borax; and some of the

dwarfs even started to get these things, but long before any of them could get to the chemist's, all was over. The moths ate, and ate, and ate, till the sealskin dwarfs, being sealskin throughout, even to the empty hearts of them, were eaten down to the very life—and they fell one by one on the snow and so came to their end. And all round the North Pole the snow was brown with their flat bare pelts.

"Oh, thank you—thank you, darling Arctic moth," cried Jane. "You *are* good—I do hope you haven't eaten enough to disagree with you afterwards!"

Millions of moth-voices answered, with laughter as soft as moth-wings, "We should be a poor set of fellows if we couldn't over-eat ourselves for once in a way—to oblige a friend."

And off they all fluttered, and the white grouse flew off, and the sealskin dwarfs were all dead, and the fires went out, and George and Jane were left alone in the dark with the dragon!

"Oh, dear," said Jane, "this is the worst of all!"

"We've no friends left to help us," said George. He never thought that the dragon himself might help them—but then that was an idea that would never have occurred to any boy.

It grew colder and colder and colder, and even under the grouse feathers the children shivered.

Then, when it was so cold that it could not manage to be any colder without breaking the thermometer, it stopped. And then the dragon uncurled himself from round the North Pole, and stretched his long, icy length over the snow, and said:—

"This is something like! How faint those fires did make me feel!"

The fact was, the sealskin dwarfs had gone the wrong way to work: the dragon had been frozen so long that now he was nothing but solid ice all through, and the fires only made him feel as if he were going to die.

But when the fires were out he felt quite well, and very hungry. He looked round for something to eat. But he never noticed George and Jane, because they were frozen to his back.

He moved slowly off, and the snow-wreaths that bound the children to the Pole gave way with a snap, and there was the dragon, crawling south—with Jane and George on his great, scaly, icy shining back. Of course the dragon had to go south if he went anywhere, because when you get to the North

Pole there is no other way to go. The dragon rattled and tinkled as he went, exactly like the cut-glass chandelier when you touch it, as you are strictly forbidden to do. Of course there are a million ways of going south from the North Pole—so you will own that it was lucky for George and Jane when the dragon took the right way and suddenly got his heavy feet on the great slide. Off he went, full speed, between the starry lamps, towards Forest Hill and the Crystal Palace.

"He's going to take us home," said Jane. "Oh, he is a good dragon. I am glad!"



"OFF HE WENT FULL SPEED."

And George was rather glad too, though neither of the children felt at all sure of their welcome, especially as their feet were wet, and they were bringing a strange dragon home with them.

They went very fast, because dragons can go up hill as easily as down. You would not understand why if I told you—because you are only in long division at present; yet if you want me to tell you, so that you can show off to other boys, I will. It is because dragons can get their tails into the fourth dimension and hold on there,

and when you can do that everything else is easy.

The dragon went very fast, only stopping to eat the collector and the sportsman, who were still struggling to go up the slide—vainly, because they had no tails, and had never even heard of the fourth dimension.

And when the dragon got to the end of the slide he crawled very slowly across the dark field beyond the field where there was

a bonfire, next to the next-door garden at Forest Hill. He went slower and slower, and in the bonfire field he stopped altogether, and, because the Arctic regions had not got down so far as that, and because the bonfire was very hot, the dragon began to melt, and melt, and melt—and before the children knew what he was doing they found themselves sitting in a large pool of water, and their boots

were as wet as wet, and there was not a bit of dragon left!

So they went indoors.

Of course some grown-up or other noticed at once that the boots of George and of Jane were wet and muddy, and that they had both been sitting down in a very damp place, so they were sent to bed immediately.

It was long past their time, anyhow.

Now, if you are of an inquiring mind—not at all a nice thing in a little boy who reads fairy tales—you will want to know how it is that since the sealskin dwarfs have all been killed, and the fires all been let out, the Aurora Borealis shines, on cold nights, as brightly as ever.

My dear, I do not know! I am not too proud to own that there are some things I know nothing about—and this is one of them. But I do know that whoever has lighted those fires again, it is certainly not the sealskin dwarfs. They were all eaten by moths—and moth-eaten things are of no use, even to light fires!

Curiosities.*

[We shall be glad to receive Contributions to this section, and to pay for such as are accepted.]

OVER TWO YEARS ASLEEP.

This is the photograph of a young lady, resident in Warsaw, who went to sleep on December 21st, 1896, and has never been awakened, in the fullest sense of the term, ever since. She lies in an almost dark room because she is unable to bear any light, on account of the severe headache it causes her, and her bed is surrounded with a heavy curtain. During the protracted period of her slumber she has almost lost her hearing, and she can only see in the afternoon towards four o'clock, and from that hour she can see until daybreak. She has no wish to eat, and life is sustained by nourishing her with milk. Her sister and widowed mother take it in turns to watch by her side, and they are obliged to wake



her up from time to time, otherwise she would sleep on for ever. Strange to say, the awakening causes her dreadful agony both physically and mentally, for then she not only has a recurrence of the headaches, but she realises the hopelessness of her awful situation. Asked how she felt when asleep, she replied: "Then I was very happy; because not only do I not suffer, but I feel delightful. My soul separates from my body, and goes into another world. I rise into infinity, heavenly light surrounds me, I hear marvellous music. Oh, Lord! why do they wake me up and drag me from that other world, so beautiful, to this earth, so full of misery and tears?" The physician who has attended her for a long time believes there is still some possibility of a cure being effected.

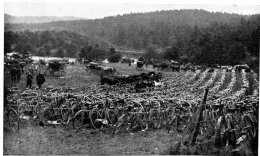
AN ARMY OF CYCLES.

The great display of bicycles seen in the accompanying photograph formed quite an accidental though none the less significantly striking feature of the Braemar Highland Gathering at Balmoral, in September of last year. The machines belong to both lady and gentleman cyclists, who trooped to the sports on their iron steeds from far and near, and this was the way these were stacked during the progress of the festival. There is a curious air of assured security pervading the scene, but one shudders to think of the awful damage that could be inflicted by a horse or two straying amongst those lines of bicycles. Her Majesty the Queen was present at the sports. The photograph was sent in by Mr. David Gibson, care of Mrs. Hogg, 4, Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh.



A CONTEMPLATIVE HORSE.

The horse seen in the ludicrous attitude shown in the accompanying photograph has a significant air of contemplation about him notwithstanding. Probably he was trying to decide the point whether life is worth living. At any rate he had been sitting in this curious position for some time before the photographer came along and snap-shotted him. The photograph was sent in to us by Mr. E. V. Fear, Essex Lodge, 58, Cotham Road, Bristol.





LOOKING DOWN SEVEN HUNDRED STEPS.

Our next photograph represents a flight of 700 steps, without a break, St. Helena as a short cut from the town to the top of the hill. The photograph was taken from the topmost step, with the camera pointing slightly downwards, hence the curious result obtained. Dr. D. J. Drake, of 18, Minster Road, Brondesbury, the sender, writes: "The task of ascending and descending these steps is no light one, and after alighting at the top or the bottom, one's legs feel as if they belonged to some other individual, and play all kinds of pranks upon their owner."



WHAT A CYCLONE IS LIKE.

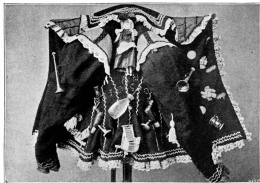
Mr. Ernest G. Brayton, of Mt. Morris, Illinois, writes: "This is a photograph of a cyclone which passed half a mile south of this city on May 18th, 1898. The 'twister' started nearly four hundred miles south-west of here, and travelled in a direct line, passing here about 5.30 p.m. To the left of the picture you can see the trees standing apparently unshaken—in fact, they have as yet scarcely been touched by the advance-guard of the terrific storm; a few minutes after the snap-shot was taken these very trees were uprooted and spread over an acre or more of ground. The photographer himself was nearly a mile away from the edge of the cyclone, but nevertheless the breeze which followed it was enough to blow the camera over and send the operator reeling. The cyclone passed through two States, leaving about forty families



homeless, and destroying one hundred thousand dollars' worth of property."

A HOUSE IN A TREE.

Houses in trees are evidently not exclusively confined to such outlandish places as New Guinea and the like. Here we have a photograph of a quaint little tenement in a lime tree at Fitchford, Salop. Murray, in his handbook of the district, describes it as a "habitation," but the Rev. A. Corbett, of Adderley Rectory, Market Drayton, the sender of the photograph, says that the term is somewhat misleading, the building being a single room without a fireplace. It has a wooden frame with plaster walls and a stone-covered roof. It is said to have been in its present position 200 years.



A BRIDE'S JACKET.

An interesting marriage custom is in vogue amongst the mill-girls on the Scottish borders. When one of their number has announced her intention of quitting the factory to prepare for her wedding, her fellow-workers contrive to hide some portion of her wearing apparel, generally a jacket or an apron. Then each one subscribes a small sum of money, which is expended in the purchase of all kinds of gaudy yams, lace, ribbons, dolls, toys, etc. With these the "stolen" garment is surreptitiously decorated and produced at the ensuing wedding festivities, when one of the party creates hearty amusement by donning it and dancing a reel in it. We reproduce a photo. of a jacket belonging to a Hawick factory bride, which has been sent in by Mr. J. G. Galbraith, Exchange Arcade, Hawick, N.B. It originally was but a plain black jacket, but the owner's friends had transformed it into a perfect blaze of colour. Notice the bells, hens, doll, and baby's bottle with the washing outfit below. Photo. taken by Richard Bell, Hawick.

A WHOLESALE CONFISCATION.

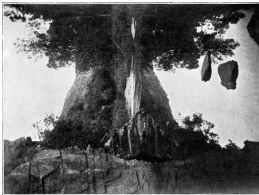
According to the Foreign Prison-Made Goods Act of 1887 the Customs authorities are given power to confiscate any goods imported for sale into this country that have been produced wholly or in part in



A MIGHTY PUSH.

The box-car seen in the remarkable position shown in our next photograph was being pushed along the Barclay railroad, about a mile from Towanda, Pa., when a local freight engine with extremely long bumpers struck it. These bumpers were knocked into such a position as actually to form an incline up which the box-car ascended with an impetus that landed it right on the top of the engine itself. Mr. Edw. Macfarlane, of 108, Poplar Street, Towanda, Pa., is the sender of the photograph.





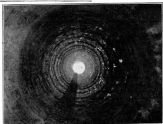
A REFLECTION PICTURE.

The next photograph we reproduce represents a scene in Baaken's River Kloof, near Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Viewed in its present position the picture has the appearance of a large tree with a couple of rocks falling from the branches; turn it to the left, and these rocks are apparently falling from the sky; but turn it to the right, and the real picture is disclosed. The curious effects pointed out are all due to reflections. Photo. sent by Mr. C. A. Smith, P.O. Box 23, Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony.

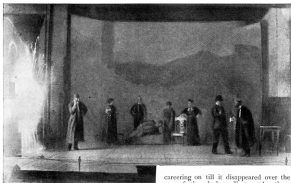
A MONSTROUS MEGAPHONE.

The next photograph we reproduce represents a monstrous horn, which formed an interesting feature in the American political campaign that ended in November of last year. The horn is 14ft. long and has seven mouthpieces, one of which can be used as a

megaphone. The scene which the photographer, Mr. J. E. Stocum, has caught here with his camera is in front of the Republican headquarters of San Diego County, and not the least interesting thing in the picture is the huge display sign in front of the headquarters. The city is the town home of U. S. Grant, a candidate for the United States Senate, which fact lent additional interest and enthusiasm to the campaign. Photo. sent by Mr. D. C. Collier, Junr., of San Diego, California.

LOOKING UP A CHIMNEY.
Here is an interior

view of a factory chimney, which has been newly built. It is located at the works of the Tasmanian Smelting Company, Zeehan, Tasmania. The sender of the photo, Mr. C. A. Owen, Junr., of Zeehan, Tasmania, writes: "Many of the 'looking upward' photographs hitherto published in your Magazine have been of objects which can easily be re-photographed at any time, but this one I send was taken from a spot which, in a few weeks, will, to say the least of it, be a very uncomfortable place for a photographer or anybody else."



THE FLASH-LIGHT THAT FAILED.

The danger of experimenting with the flash-light is forcibly illustrated in our next photograph, which has been sent in by Mr. F. W. Marshall, 2, Limburg Road, Battersea Rise, S.W. The incident happened after the rehearsal of a semi-amateur production at a theatre in the south-west of England. A local photographer desired to ascertain how a new flash-light idea would work out, and arranged matters accordingly, but on pressing the button, lo! the whole apparatus "went lost." A fountain of liquid fire was thrown up to the height of the proscenium and spread all over the stage, which luckily was pretty clear at the time, and comparatively little damage was therefore done. The explosion was so instantaneous that the negative had taken the scene before the flames had reached their full height, and, as may be noticed, the people on the stage had not had time to be startled.



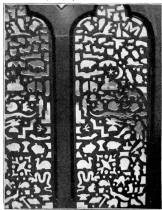
A PLAYFUL STEAM ROLLER.

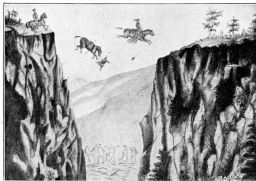
Steam rollers are very stodgy, ponderous-looking things, but they can be very self-willed and even playful at times. The one seen in our photograph has come to grief as the result of giving way to a frolicsome mood. One day, when it was at work at the Keyham Docks, it suddenly got beyond the control of the driver, who attempted to put on the brake but found it would not act. He managed to save his life by jumping off the engine, which, however, went

careering on till it disappeared over the side of one of the docks. Fortunately, there was a sufficient depth of water in the dock at the time to break its fall. Photo. sent by Mr. E. M. Parry, of 26, Crane Street, Chester.

A CURIOUS GATE.

Here is a photograph of the cast-iron panel of a gate at the entrance to a carriage-drive leading to a house near Keighley. If examined closely, the design will be found to contain pictures of various animals, from a kangaroo to a snake, in addition to innumerable inanimate objects, such as boots, bottles, and hammers. At the top of the panel are the initials "B. F. M.," whilst near the centre, just under the star and crescent, is a correct outline of the house to which the gate gives entrance. We are indebted to Mr. Clarence Ponting, of Floss House, Keighley, for the use of the photograph.





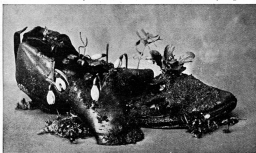
A LEGEND OF THE HARZ MOUNTAINS.

Miss F. C. Emerson, of Heinrich Strasse 34, Hanover, Germany, writes: "This old picture illustrates the following legend of the Harz Mountains. Bodo, the wicked Bohemian King, fell violently in love with Brennhildis, daughter of the King of the Giants, who in those days inhabited the region. Annoyed by his vehement attentions, she fled from him on her fiery steed, closely pursued by her suitor. At the spot where the witches hold their nightly revels, a yawning abyss stopped, for a moment, their wild flight, but the Princess urged on her charger to the terrible leap across the chasm. The noble animal bore his mistress in safety to the opposite height, his hoof sinking deep into the solid rock, so that the gigantic hoof-print is visible to this day on the 'Rosstrappe.' The golden crown fell from the Princess's head, and is still guarded by pixies at the bottom of the river. Her wicked lover, unable to imitate her bold spring, was precipitated into the depths of the stream, which is called after him, the Bode." Photo. by F. Rose, Muhlenthal.



A CURIOUS LITTLE GARDEN.

The dilapidated-looking pair of shoes seen in our next photo, were found only a few days before Easter this year near the village of Gandershofen, in Alsatia, behind the very hedge where they had evidently been discarded some years before by a tramp.



In the course of time they had become filled with dust from the road, and moss had covered the outside more or less. The seeds of the snow-drops seen blooming on them had evidently been carried into the shoes by the wind. It was not found possible to take the photo. on the spot of discovery, but Count Alfred Bothmer, of Wiesbaden, the sender, writes that it must not be imagined that this little garden has been arranged by human hands.

SHORTEST RAILWAY IN THE WORLD.

This curious little American railway, which is only a rail in length, is situated in the Olympic Range of mountains, in Washington, about a hundred miles north-west of Seattle. It is of standard gauge, and is properly ballasted. It was evidently built for the purpose of holding the "right of way" through the mountain pass, but has been in existence for several years now without



the holes left by rotten branches. The photograph was sent in by Mr. William A. Roe, of Survey Camp, Parkes, New South Wales.

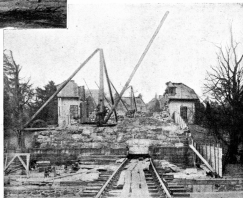
A ROADWAY THROUGH A HOUSE.

Here is a curious instance of the pertinacity of a landowner. A new bridge to cross the River Tay at Perth being in course of erection, it was found necessary to acquire a right of way through certain grounds on which a house also stood. The owner of the house and grounds, however, would only sell on compulsion, and then only so much as was absolutely necessary for the erection of the bridge. As this portion did not include the whole of the house, only the middle part was taken down, the two ends left standing, as seen in our photograph, remaining in possession of the owner. Of course when the bridge is completed these ends will have to come down. Our photograph was taken by Mr. Sam. A. Forbes, of Perth, and forwarded by Mr. David Inglis, of the Inland Revenue, Perth.

being extended in any way. Mr. T. H. Parker, Room 1, over 415, Dundas Street, Woodstock, Ontario, in sending us the photograph, writes to say that his brother, Mr. W. D. Dawson, Postmaster at Piedmont, Washington, which is the nearest post-office to this unique railway, forwarded the photograph to him, which was taken by J. E. Thomas, Port Angeles, Washington.

A TREE ON FIRE.

Above is a snap-shot of a hollow tree on fire in an Australian forest 300 miles north-west of Sydney. The smoke from the fire within is pouring out of





A PALM-FIG TREE.

About eight miles from Plymouth, the capital of Montserrat, one of the Leeward Island group of the Caribbean Islands, may be seen the natural freak here shown, viz., a tall palm tree growing from the centre of a fig tree. Both trees are vigorous and healthy, and are situated on a partly abandoned sugar estate. Sender of photo., Mr. E. C. Jackson, Fontabelle, Barbados, W.I.

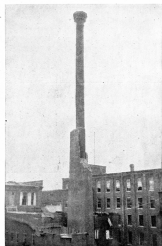
"TWELVE YEARS IN CHAINS."

The narrative of this gentleman's adventures will be found one of the most thrilling stories on record, even in the annals of the world's personal adventure. The photo. shows us Mr. Chas. Newfeld as he used to sit writing in the dread Sufer prison at Omdurman. Mr. Newfeld was a German merchant, and away back in the eighties his caravan was betrayed in the desert by a treacherous guide, and he himself taken captive to Omdurman, the Mahdi's capital. Here, for twelve long years, Mr. Newfeld endured the most frightful tortures and extraordinary adventures, until at length the victorious Sir, Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, entered Omdurman and struck off his chains. This remarkable and thrilling narrative will make its first appearance in *The Wide World Magazine*, and the first instalment will be found in the



THE EFFECT OF LIGHTNING.

This is the appearance presented by a chimney situated in Wakefield, Mass., after it had been struck by lightning on March 12th, 1899. As will be seen, practically the whole of the outer wall was stripped clean off, leaving the inner shell standing perfectly sound. Photo. sent by Mr. John S. Griffiths, 73, Pleasant Street, Wakefield, Mass.



June number of that periodical. This astounding narrative is already much talked of, and it is likely to be

long before the romance of real life produces anything to rival it in interest, for, as civilization advances, such stories must necessarily become rarer and rarer. Mr. Newfeld's narrative will be copiously illustrated with photographs, plans, and special drawings by Mr. Charles H. Sheldon, the well-known war artist, who is well acquainted with the Sudan. The first instalment of the story—which in many respects casts a new light on history—is prefaced by an introduction from the pen of Sir George Newnes, Bart., whose advice and assistance Mr. Newfeld sought when he reached Cairo.

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